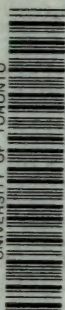


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NIGHTS AND DAYS  
ON THE GYPSY TRAIL

By Irving Brown









*'Photo by Austin A. Breed*

*A Rose of the Albayzín*

# NIGHTS AND DAYS ON THE GYPSY TRAIL

*Through Andalusia and on Other  
Mediterranean Shores. With an  
Account of the Romany Race, &  
an Introduction by*  
GEORGE E. WOODBERRY

By  
IRVING BROWN

*With Many Illustrations  
from Photographs*



Harper & Brothers Publishers  
New York and London  
1922



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NIGHTS AND DAYS ON THE GYPSY TRAIL

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*First Edition*

H-W



DEDICATED TO  
VICENTE BLASCO IBÁÑEZ

Who has given us such  
varied and vivid pictures  
of the Spanish Gypsy



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## TO THE READER

The scope of the present work is by no means to present a picture of Spain, nor even to give information regarding the Gypsy race. My aim is rather to take you far and wide on the open road, to introduce you as a friend to some of the many Gypsies whom I have known intimately, and to initiate you into the joys and adventures of the Gypsy trail.

If you are curious to know the facts of Romani history, consult the *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, the work of a body of keen and accurate scholars.

As the Gypsies have no alphabet of their own, it has seemed advisable to use a universal system of spelling: *č*=ch as in chin, *š*=sh as in shin, *x*=h as in Ho! but more guttural and more aspirate, *i*=i in machine, *e*=é in café, *a*=a in father, *u*=oo in doom.

I wish to thank Mr. Austin A. Breed, of Cincinnati, who kindly allowed me to use a number of his artistic photographs, Mary Sullivan Brown, who gave me valuable aid in preparing the manuscript, and my friend and Master, George E. Woodberry, who has presented me to you.

## TO THE READER

My greatest debt is to the Gypsies themselves; and the only way I can repay it is by endeavoring to communicate to you something of my love and enthusiasm for these glorious wanderers.

No peoples nor individuals are blameless. Therefore, when I have mentioned any living person who might wish to shun the limelight, I have disguised his identity.

If you like this narrative, it will be followed by another introducing you to wider circles of the most varied and colorful of Gypsies, those of America. The "Romani patteran" passes unseen at your very door, leading to realms of unsuspected wonders.

I. B.



## INTRODUCTION

There is little need of a prologue to a Gypsy tale. It has a freshness, a new reality, a discovery or re-discovery of the bewildering joy of life, that gives it quick audience with those whose wits are keen and whose senses are warm. The Gypsy trail is magnetic with that bewildering joy—"the joy of life." Lightly we speak the words, now of the Greek morning of the world, now of the medieval road pilgrim and jongleur haunted, now of the Renaissance fête; but in our mouths there is a homesickness in the phrase. It connotes that age-old revolt against civilization, noticeable in the late universal voyaging to the South Seas, and that harking back to the primitive which is a persistent mark of the discontent—divine or otherwise—of civilization with itself. Civilization, we vaguely feel, has missed something of "the good of God." But we need not go to the South Seas to find the natural way of living. The primitive life has always been lived. Since men first left the jungle, it has held its own, on the long road, against the wiles of trade and empire, in all races and countries, survived in social groups and been reverted to by individuals, a life of instinct and impulse, care-free, with its joys of the blood and the moment—

## INTRODUCTION

“careless of mankind.” The Gypsies are its most intense example, and have become its symbol.

This volume is one of the torn pages of the book of youth. Our author is more than sympathetic—*molto simpatico*—with what he describes; indeed, he has the secret that only the blood can tell to the understanding heart, and speaks as one of the tribe. The “black drop” colors all he writes. Though the Gypsies have gone everywhere and he has shared their meals in many lands, Spain is, *par excellence*, their country,—fits them romantically, temperamentally, locally,—they harmonize; and he makes Spain the background of his days and nights on the trail whose windings he follows all over the Peninsula. Lovers of Spain will delight in this roving journey. In it Spain is not so much seen as lived; so sharp are the lines, so compact the simple scenes and full of color and verve, that they illustrate themselves; and, caught all about the Gypsy life, there is a wealth of lovely landscape, as the trail goes by mountain and plain among the half-dozen cities of marvel that bejewel Spain. The feeling as well as the picture of Spain is here. But it is the human life that holds the center of the scene, and “the joy of life” is its other name. Song and dance and wine are in the foreground: song that is poetry (and the young traveler has an eye for purity of line in a poem as keen as for the plastic, sculp-

## INTRODUCTION

tural line of motion in the dance)—and, especially, the dance in its manifold forms and here seen in its own wild setting of the land and the race. The image that holds the rhythm of beauty and passion in this weave of the land and the race concentrates and condenses in the dancer; and thus the author transfers to the page, in his descriptions of the dance, the image of a life rather than of men and women, strange cities and dark night-caves and bright festas of the sun. It is a lover of beauty in every form who here writes with the artist's delight; color and line and cadence are perceived and felt as the harmonies of life itself.

And yet, charming as is the artistic quality in this book to me, its humanity makes a profounder appeal. Spain has long been a "shore of romance" where any scene of enchantment, of beauty or passion, any touch of the magic of life harmonizes; but in these scenes it is their humanity that gives the stamp of reality. Our author got at the heart of the Gypsy life; and though there is no veil drawn here over their days and ways, and the figures are shown in the life, one finds himself saying *sotto voce* "How sound their humanity really is!" It is true it is somewhat restricted in its scope. But within the kin what a wealth of the first and oldest virtues of mankind,—loyalty, trust, thoughtless unselfishness! and what brave spirits! The volume ends with

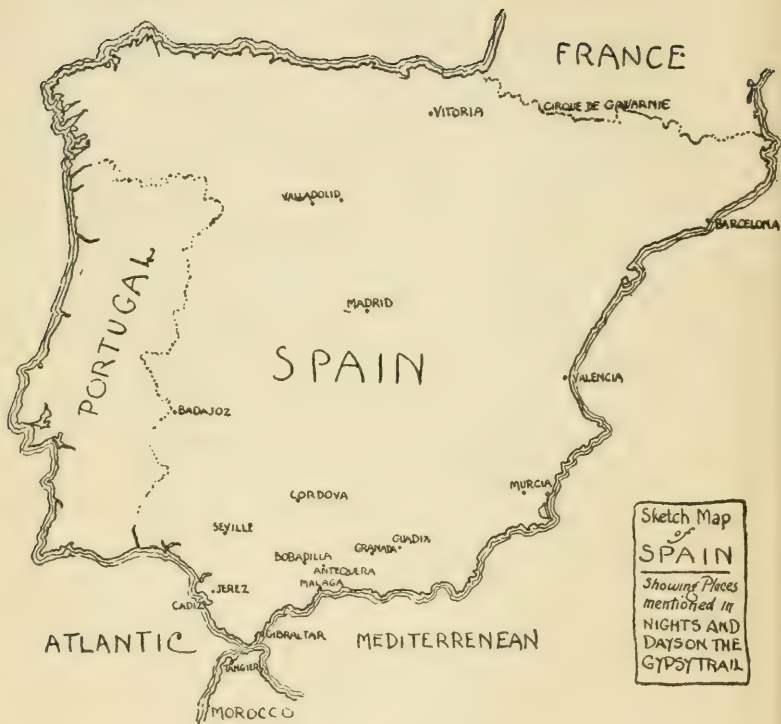
## INTRODUCTION

scenes of the bull-fights, quite unvarnished tales, and an interpretation (as one might call it) of the Gypsy bull-fighters that makes wholly intelligible admiration for those heroes. As with the bull-fighters, so with the others, this book throws a ray upon the human heart,—the “one hood” whereof all men are made, that no hard fate, no poverty nor want nor distress, and no evil life wholly corrupts and destroys. It is as quite an unusual chapter of human life, as well as for its artistic quality, its sensitive and broad sympathy, and its “joy of life” that I venture to introduce this book of my young friend to the public.

G. E. W.

BEVERLY, June 2, 1922.

NIGHTS AND DAYS  
ON THE GYPSY TRAIL



# NIGHTS AND DAYS ON THE GYPSY TRAIL

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## Chapter I

### *The Fascination of the Gypsy*

**I**MAGINE yourselves in a square cave hollowed from the rock. A little Spanish Gypsy girl is dancing an *abulea* to the accompaniment of a wild song and the vibrant notes of a guitar. Other Gypsies sitting tensely on the rims of their chairs, in a half circle about the dancer, are beating time with vigorous handclaps, and shouting, “¡Alsá! ¡Alsá!” in tones that make the stone vault re-echo. Dancer and audience are as one, in a frenzy of excitement. The tiny feet stamp the rough floor; the gaily colored skirt flutters as she springs. Her elastic body bends and sways. There is something of the snake and something of the bird, in the writhing arms and quivering fingers. There is a glitter in her eye, whether she strikes her bosom in mock rage, or leaps with head thrown back and lips parted in a paroxysm of joy. And an answering sparkle illumines the eye of every Gypsy.



## NIGHTS AND DAYS ON THE GYPSY TRAIL

This is what I saw the first day I met the Gitanos of Granada. I had come to where they live in great numbers on a steep hillside, on the outskirts of the city, hidden away in caves among the cactus. Baedeker warns the traveler to stay away from this Gypsy quarter, the Albayzín, and a French writer, René Bazin, has described it as a veritable inferno from which he fled in horror. Before starting out that afternoon I had disguised myself, as I thought, in a white cotton suit such as worn by the lower classes in Andalusia, and a gorgeous silk handkerchief to replace the stiff collar of respectability. But no sooner had I approached the district than the word “¡Ingrés!”—in Spain every tourist is an “Englishman”—was shouted from cave to cave; and in a moment I was surrounded by a throng of half-naked children tugging at my coat and begging. Picturesque girls soon joined them, likewise begging, in a most polite and gracious but insistent manner, while fierce-looking men hovered in the background.

When one of the women came forward asking to tell my fortune, I said to her in Gypsy, “No, thank you, Mother. *Penaré tiri baxí*, I will tell *your* fortune.” Her face went blank. An apparent *Gačó*, a *Bu’nó*, as the *Gajo*, the non-Gypsy, is called by the *Gitanos*—and a foreigner at that, answering her thus, in the secret tongue of her people, had numbed even her ready



## THE FASCINATION OF THE GYPSY

wits. But quickly recovering them, she cried, "*¡Caló!*" meaning "black," the word by which they designate a member of their race. So when a little boy came running up a moment later to beg from me, she drove him off by saying, "He's no Ingrés. He's as black as you are."

In my joy at being recognized as one of them, I took off my gay silk handkerchief and presented it to the woman. As it happened, this was the act of a true Romani and gained the sympathy and approval of all the Gypsies there; for, as among most primitive races, an exchange of presents on meeting is a not uncommon custom. The woman, La Josefa, and her husband were poor, but they offered me all they had—the hospitality of their cave. And on learning that I wanted to see a baile flamenco they sent for a relative, one of the best dancers of the Albayzín, to come and dance for me.

When King Alfonso had visited Granada she had danced before him, but only for the sake of the gold with which he had showered her. King though he was, he had been a mere *Gačó*, to be exploited. There was a flash of irony in her smile as she told of the touch of regal condescension in Alfonso's praise. No king could overawe Marianita. Was not fat old Pepe the king of the Gypsies; and his brother a king likewise? In fact, every *Caló* of the Albayzín had royal blood in his veins when it came to selling his

## NIGHTS AND DAYS ON THE GYPSY TRAIL

photograph to a tourist. "Titles," she said, "make such an impression on every silly *Gačó*."

But now she was dancing for one of her own people, the humblest of whom is worthier in the eyes of the proud Gypsy than any potentate of Europe or Asia. Moreover, she was dancing for the sheer joy of it, with all the fire and abandon that comes with doing a deed for its own sake rather than for the hire.

No gift could have been more precious than the sight of that age-old dance, a dance that breathed of immemorial rites of the mysterious Orient. As for the cave, hollowed from the rock in prehistoric times perhaps, it might have appeared bare and unattractive to the casual observer; but the friendliness of my hosts made it seem to me an Aladdin's grotto.

I sat in the doorway that evening and gazed across at the Alhambra, that Arabian Nights' dream. As the sun slowly sank, the ruddy towers were bathed in a blood-stained glow. The tide of darkness swelling from among the somber cypress trees in the valley of the Darro below, closed about the lofty buttresses. Far away, clearly outlined against the deepening blue of the sky, lay the Sierra Nevada, glowing a pale rose in the dying light.

What changing scenes those mountains had beheld! I thought of the Moorish sultans that had lived and died in the ancient palace on the



*Photo by Austin A. Breed*

*A Rose of the Albayzín*



## THE FASCINATION OF THE GYPSY

hillside opposite. I wondered if, amid the jealous greed for wealth and domination that had brought their civilization to a swift decay, their happiest moments had not been spent in watching some light-hearted child of nature, in just such an Eastern dance of youthful joy as I had seen that afternoon. I wondered also if it were true, as men of science have suggested, that the marvelous stalactite decorations of the ceilings of the windowless halls in the Alhambra were a reminiscence of the caves in which their ancestors may once have dwelled. Perhaps in spite of the sumptuous splendor of their palace, they had cherished a secret longing for the simple dwellings and free, wandering life of their fathers.

At all events, here were the Gitanos living as they pleased, as they had lived for untold centuries, caring neither for trade nor empire, living their happy nomadic lives, while civilizations had come and gone, as day is followed by night. They alone had remained unchanged—as aloof and unmindful as the distant mountains.

That night I was very happy, for at last I had been admitted to the inner circle of the shyest and most exclusive of races. They had recognized in me one of their own blood, a new variety of the species, from across the seas, but a true Gypsy, a *Gitano de verdad*, “with seven ribs and a half,” like every real son of Egypt.

## NIGHTS AND DAYS ON THE GYPSY TRAIL

To reach this goal was the culmination of a long-cherished wish, and of patient effort. At the time I was a student at the University of Wisconsin, taking a vacation tour. The discovery of Borrow's *Gypsies of Spain* had given me the Romani fever, or rather, had renewed it.

As a very small child I remember seeing a Romani with enormous earrings, and a scarlet handkerchief on her head. I followed her at a distance for a long time, in spite of the fact that I was afraid of her, owing to the kidnapping legend. Perhaps I was half hoping that I should be kidnapped. For at any rate, a regret at not having followed her farther haunted me for years.

In that edition of Borrow's book was a large vocabulary of Spanish Gypsy, and a few pages of connected discourse in *Caló*—a portion of the New Testament, and an account of a robbery. I bent every effort to master the language and though it was not as difficult as learning Egyptian from the Rosetta stone, it was not easy.

There remained one difficulty that would have discouraged one less ardently determined to get himself accepted as a Romani. I lacked the necessary dark complexion. To acquire it I went every day through May and April to the end of a pier on Lake Mendota, where I could get the full rays of the sun. I lay on my back there watching the restless swaying of the silvery



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willows and the passing of the vagrant clouds, like great white islands always drifting, and conjugated over and over the Gypsy equivalent of the verb *amare*. In the spring sun, tanning was a slow process; but the sea winds of a South Atlantic passage and a ride bareheaded across the blazing sands of Morocco in July gave the proper shade of Romani brown.

There is a certain joy in casting off one's own personality and playing a role. The play instinct is inherent in every one of us. It is not the exceptional person, as Baudelaire imagined when he wrote of one "in whom, while in the cradle, a fairy had breathed a love of travesties and masquerades, and a passion for travel." The fairy has visited us all. Like children, all of us are fond of "dressing up," or of traveling to the land of Make-believe. I was held by the same intense fascination of the "game" as Kim was, in India—the game of transforming one's self and moving in strange surroundings. Here at my door lay a world of Hindu nomads, with all the alluring mystery of the East.

At the time, however, it never occurred to me that I was playing a role; and it was not long before I was convinced that I had a strain of Gypsy blood. The origin of the family on my mother's side is still unknown, and the name is a common one among Welsh and English Gypsies. Periodically my grandfather would revert to a

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Gypsy life, camping and trading horses. In his old age he wandered off alone to the mountains of Colorado, and died on the never-ending trail. A number of the family have the Gypsy features and coloring; and a cousin of mine arrived independently at the same conclusion that I had. Was it the call of the blood, or simply the call of the wild, the wanderlust that is a common heritage?

I knew that I should have no trouble in finding Gypsies in Spain; but I could not wait. Almost every day I would go to a place where they often camp on the outskirts of Madison. It was a veritable "Gypsy dell," a delightful spot, so hidden by trees that not a house was in sight. On one side was a small grove with pools of dark water and a tangle of underbrush. On the other side was a marsh with a lazy stream. In front, half hidden by the enveloping swamp, one could just discern Lake Wingra, like a silver bow, with its amphitheater of wooded hills.

But the watched pot never boils. Day after day I found only the same charred remains of last year's campfires. The blackbirds, the *Romani čiriklos* were chattering gaily, and the roving warblers were making sweet melodies in the thicket; but the music of the birds only emphasized the loneliness of the spot, and mocked at my disappointment on missing the migratory Gypsies.



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Finally one evening as the crimson light was fading over the lake, I caught the gleam of camp-fires through the grove. My heart thumped. I was torn between apprehension and joy. The supreme test had come. How would they treat me?

Past the caravans, amid the barking dogs, I made my way with assumed boldness to the open fire where a couple of men and a little girl were sitting. One of the men, who was dark and stout, looked as though he might be a Gypsy. The other had the unmistakable features of an Irishman; but the girl, with her dark eyes dancing in the firelight and an orange handkerchief about her lithe throat, seemed certainly to be a *Romani čai*, so I greeted them with a "*Sar šan!*"

"Good evening!" they answered, apparently ignoring my Gypsy greeting. Still, I was not discouraged; and a little later, to break the ice, I offered to go to a saloon half a mile away and fetch some beer. It gave me a chance to recover my poise; and when I came back I tried some more *Romanes* on them.

"Those are nice *grais*," I said, pointing to the horses. "Yes, that is nice grass," the stout man replied, with the suggestion of a twinkle in his eye. I learned that his name was Lee, a common one among English Gypsies; and that he had just come up from the South, and was stopping over for the horse market along with Mr. O'Dowd

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there, who was also a "trader." But I got no farther, and withdrew greatly downcast.

As I think it over, I am sure that Lee was a Gypsy; but as yet I had only a little of the vocabulary, and none of the manner. Furthermore, as I realize now, I had been guilty of a bad breach of Romani etiquette in addressing him in *Romanes* before the Irishman, a *Gajo*. Traveling in a caravan and trading horses does not make one a Gypsy.

Why was I so fascinated by this people? There was nothing unusual in this desire to know the Romanies. I have observed a keen interest in them at home and abroad, in every class of society; and evidence of this interest is patent in the works of authors as different as Cervantes, Emerson, and Hugo, and, in our own day, Blasco Ibáñez, Vachel Lindsay, and Tolstoy.

Is it not because their life in the open air, and their real or apparent freedom represent an ideal that has always been dear to humanity? Since the earliest times men have dreamed of a golden age, when mankind lived in utter simplicity beneath the stars, untroubled by ideas of good and evil.

The sight of a Gypsy, from a crowded street car in a grimy city, brings us visions of a long white road, bordered by green branches waving in the wind, beckoning to us to come and see what lies beyond the hill where it disappears.



*Photo by Austin A. Breed*

*Here Were the Gitanos Living  
as They Pleased. In an Old Garden  
Near the Alhambra*



## THE FASCINATION OF THE GYPSY

"Any stroller," says Stevenson in his *Inland Voyage*, "must be dear to the right thinking heart, if it were only as a protest against offices and the mercantile spirit, and as something to remind us that life is not by necessity the kind of thing that we generally make it. There is nobody under thirty so dead but his heart will stir a little at the sight of a Gypsy camp."

Life has become so complicated. The innumerable things that we possess have come to possess us so completely that even the business man checking over his accounts, and the housewife washing dishes has an unconfessed longing to "chuck it all" and be a Gypsy.

Civilization imposes a host of responsibilities and suppressions, and causes a constant straining of the higher brain centers that cries for relaxation. No wonder that deep in our hearts we should envy this untamed, passionate race that has never grown up, this race whose motto is that of Rabelais' ideal society in the Abbaye de Thélème, "Do as you like!"

Romani existence is life in its barest essence, free from the unessentials, vivid and intense without nerve-wearing tension; it is an eternal holiday! The Gypsies are like the negro mammy who explained her happiness and freedom from worry, saying: "Honey, it's 'cause I weahs de worl' like a loose garment."

The Romani has not only the charms of unre-



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straint and irrepressible good humor, "le charme de la canaille," but also the charm of mystery. Science instead of killing our sense of wonder has increased it. When one climbs a hill the view expands and with it the horizon line, behind which lies the unknown.

Of all races his is the most impenetrable. From where does he come? Whither is he always going? He speaks a secret language, and moves in hidden ways. He brings us all the mystery of the Orient. Wherever he wanders he inspires a belief in his occult gifts. His unfathomable stare seems to pierce the future. The Gypsies are a living embodiment of the Faust legend—a race that has sold its soul to the devil in return for supernatural powers and the boon of eternal youth.

Is not charm and fascination the very quintessence of the Romani? Human magnetism and hypnotic suggestion are their stock-in-trade, whether they are snake-charmers, as in Syria, or tamers of wild animals, like Roumanian Gypsies I know, or *toreros* like Gallito, the greatest of modern times, who seemed to magnetize the bulls he fought, or horse traders, like Chisindine Lee, whom I have seen animate an old plug with a few words and persuade the buyer into thinking he was getting a spirited steed, or whether they are chiromancers like Yano Yunko, the Serbian Gypsy, who recently induced a Cincinnati grocer

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to part with several thousands of dollars, or musicians like my friend Rigo, who spirited away the wife of a Belgian prince by the spell of his magic violin. In every field the Gypsies gain their ends by their weird powers of fascination.

They charm without being charmed. In Spain I have seen the same phenomenon that Liszt describes in his book, *Les Bohémiens et leur musique*, in which he tells how their seductiveness was the terror of tutors, mothers, and wives of the Russian aristocracy. "Who can count their victims?" the composer asks. "One can understand how numerous they must be, as he contemplates these witches, who are usually very beautiful, and whose songs and seductive movements are capable of awakening intoxication in the most resistant spirits." If there is one word that summarizes the Romani nature it is the word *farouche*, with all its connotations of wild, sullen, shy; if there is one animal that symbolizes it, it is the panther.

Toward the close of the Middle Ages Europe was mystified by a new kind of invasion. Out of the East came a weird race of Oriental nomads: men, women, and children on horseback and in caravans. Since in those days it was the fashion to interpret everything in religious terms, just as to-day we interpret all phenomena in economic concepts, some one at once supposed that they were the tribe of Egyptians, condemned by God

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to wander, for having refused shelter to the infant Jesus during the flight into Egypt. Finding that the idea that they were doing religious penance aroused interest and sympathy, the Gypsies presented this tale wherever they went; and, as frequently happens, they told the tale so often that they came to believe it themselves.

Naturally they embroidered on the story. One of the Boswells once said to me in all seriousness: "It ain't no wonder that the real autocrats"—he meant aristocrats—"likes to mingle with us. We've all got r'yal blood in our bodies. We comes from Pharaoh."

With no maps, and no knowledge of the language of the countries through which they were passing, they found their way with an extraordinary facility that seems like second sight. The Gypsy appears to have a special sense of orientation, something similar to the instinctive process which guides the birds in their migrations.

In order not to attract hostile attention they were forced to separate into small bands. Wherever they went they left a *patteran*, or *patrins*. I have seen *patrins* consisting of pieces of rag tied along a fence, or bent twigs at cross-roads to indicate their route. It is said that they once used a mark in the form of Siva's trident.

Survivors of a Nomadic Age, when the wide world belonged to no man, Gypsies have roamed



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the entire globe: as much at home in Florida as Finland, in Argentina as in South Africa. I know a family in which the eldest child was born near Moscow, another in Marseilles, a third in Liverpool, and the youngest at Coney Island. In Chicago I met a Gypsy born in Greece. He could speak eighteen languages with more or less fluency. And although he had only been in this country a few years, he had traveled throughout the Union.

They are a race without a country. They recognize no man-made boundary lines; and instead of loving a certain prescribed area, the true Romanies love the wide world. All nature is their fatherland.

It is not often that they talk about their love for nature, however; they are nearly all like Sinfie Lovell, the Romani friend of Watts Dunton, who once accompanied that author to the top of Snowden to watch the dawn. When asked why she did not express any enthusiasm over the marvelous grandeur of the scene, she replied, "*You* enjoys talkin' about it, *I* enjoys lettin' it soak in!"

Though they have no national ties, they have bonds of blood, and a common language that binds them together more firmly than men of any other race. In *La Dernière Classe*, Daudet has the old Alsatian schoolmaster tell his pupils that a people that retains its tongue will always main-

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tain its integrity. It can never be enslaved; for its language is the key to its prison.

The Gypsy treasures his language above all else; and is most careful that no one outside his race shall learn it. "It used to be against the Romani religion," one of the Boswells remarked to me one day, "to teach *Romanes* to a *Gajo*."

It is their language which has given us a clue to their origin. *Romanes* is an ancient tongue, closely allied to Sanskrit. As spoken currently by the Hungarian and Slavic Gypsies in America, the ones who have best preserved it, the language has a complex grammar with declension of nouns as in Latin. It has borrowed widely from other tongues; and the various loan-words incorporated into it, as the main body of Gypsies journeyed westward, form a sort of *patteran* by which we can retrace their wanderings through Eastern Europe, the Near East, Persia, and finally to India. The Gypsies are Hindus.

The Gypsies have no alphabet, no books; and very few can read or write. For this very reason they have preserved their beautiful old folk tales in which young and old take keen delight. I have listened to stories of enchanted princes, good fairies, and marvelous birds, which, as I was assured in all seriousness, once used to talk and guide men to magical treasure cities.

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It is extraordinary how this ancient race, scattered far and wide, has maintained its integrity.

Apart from the Hindu coloring and general cast of features there is no mistaking the smile and the stare of a true Romani.

There is something very winning about the Gypsy smile. It is so natural and spontaneous. It never palls. Still more fascinating, more hypnotic is the glance. The kodak cannot capture it; and no painter has quite succeeded in reproducing its likeness. It is an intense, absorbing stare that holds one in a spell. Frans Hals has portrayed the Gypsy smile in *La Bohémienne*, and Garofolo the bird-like glance in *La Zingarella*. I do not believe that the actual models for these pictures were Gypsies; but that in each the artist, haunted by the expressive beauty of some passing Romani girl, has immortalized his fleeting vision. More faithful reproductions of the elusive Gypsy stare have been fixed on the canvasses of Henri and Zuloaga, painted directly from nature.

Many of the Gypsy girls are very beautiful, though like all Oriental races they wither rapidly. As Blasco Ibáñez aptly states in *La Bodega*, they pass "from youth to old age, like the splendid tropical days that leap from light into darkness, and know no twilight."

I shall never forget the beauty of Elena, a

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sixteen or seventeen year old Slavic Gypsy. Her garment of many colors revealed a lithe, smoothly undulating body. Underneath the flimsy cloth her round breasts stood out as firm as a bronze statue. The crimson scarf on her head harmonized with the rosy glow of her olive skin and her glistening blue-black hair. Her large dark eyes were wells of living light.

In spite of the fact that they are a Southern race, their exposure to extremes of temperature has made them remarkably immune to cold. With the thermometer at zero, I have sat wrapped in a heavy coat, huddling close to the fire, and watched the little Gypsy children running in and out of the tent naked, with a biting wind blowing across the Illinois prairie.

The Oriental origin of the Romanies is obvious from their dress. Hindus have told me that the necklaces of gold coins worn by the Gypsies, their red silk scarfs and gay clothes are similar to those of the nomads of India. To us there is something barbaric in their taste; but the combinations of magenta, vivid green, and orange are becoming, and remind one of the brilliant color harmonies in Persian paintings.

Like most Orientals, they are fatalistic. Pelted by snow and rain, driven from pillar to post by the *Gajos*, they submit to the harshest circumstances without a murmur. Nature and



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destiny have made them philosophical. "Only dogs and *Gajos* get mad," I once heard a Gypsy say.

This does not mean, however, that they are stolid. Extreme mobility of temperament is a prominent trait. Though they bow to the inevitable, they are very passionate, and have quick tempers. I have seen two Gypsies ready to spring at each other like wolves—and an instant later the arms that were extended to strangle would be about each other's neck in an embrace. Their keen sensibility and complete self-expression is that of the child and the artist.

Their Asiatic origin is evident in still another way. They are extremely polite. Even in Spain, where the lower classes are distinguished for their fine manners, the Gypsy is noticeable for his courtesy, as smooth and ceremonious as that of a Grand Marquis or a Japanese ambassador.

As with the ancient Shepherd Kings of Asia, the organization of Gypsy society is patriarchal. The father is a benevolent despot, venerated and loving. More than once I have been touched by the sight of a rough-looking *dad* (a Romani word, by the way), with his sleeping children nestling in both arms, unwilling to stir lest he wake them.

Contrary to the common conception, even the wildest are very fond of family. One poet,

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Joyce Kilmer, has caught something of this spirit in a delightful poem called *Roofs*. Here is a stanza from it:

“If you call the gypsy a vagabond,  
I think you do him wrong;  
For he never goes a-traveling  
But he takes his home along.”

Instead of beating their children, as legend falsely has it, they almost invariably spoil them. From the child's point of view the life of the Romanies is an ideal one. He is allowed to do just as he pleases. His parents help him to evade the truant officer, though, as a rule, he does not need much help. He is always camping out, and seeing new sights. He dresses like a grown-up and smokes or swears if he likes. No one is forever telling him not to get his hands dirty, or not to soil the curtains. Troublesome ideas of right and wrong do not bother him. It makes no difference if he has no playthings: it is more fun to play with fire and knives; and a live rat is better any day than a mechanical toy; real horses are better to ride than wooden ones; and begging and *čoripen* are most delightful games.

I shall always picture a group of *čave* with their tiny heads in a row, peeping over the tail-board of a caravan with impish smiles at some *Gajo* children who were gazing after them with envious eyes.

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Being a patriarchal people they feel that they are all of the same blood. In addressing even a strange Gypsy they usually say: "Cousin" or "Sister." Feeling that they are one big family, their loyalty and hospitality to one another are really remarkable. Here is what Johnston Boswell, a Romani of the old type, said to me in this regard:

"In the old days, if you was alone, away from your *folkies*, you could go into any camp, and they'd come out and say: 'My dear boy, my own flesh and blood,' and they'd put their arms around you, and the girls would fetch water and wash the dust from your hands and face. And they wouldn't let you stir till you'd had a bite to eat. Afterward they'd pawn their silver things if they had to, to send you back to your father and mother, or they'd take you back themselves." His language, if not elegant, had a beautiful, almost biblical simplicity. "It's not like that now," he lamented; though his own words on parting belied the statement: "As long as I've a *tan* to sleep in, my son, a *beti xaben* to eat, you're welcome to share it."

It is this delightful quality that has made my days among the Gypsies full of joy. Taking it for granted that I might be in need because I was alone, and a Gypsy, on three occasions I have had strange Romanies offer me money on first meeting. Once a Roumanian Gypsy lad told me

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that he would be glad to pawn his only pawnable possession in order to be able to lend me something. Another time, meeting an elderly Russian Gypsy on the street, she asked me what I did for a living. In order not to lost caste, or arouse suspicion, I said that I was a thief. The word for thief, *čor*, happens to sound very much like the one for poor, and understanding the latter, she immediately put her hand in her pocket.

People have often asked me, "What good are the Gypsies, anyway?" One might reply by asking, "What good are the red-birds, or the purple ragweed that grows along the roadsides?" Apart from their contribution to the world by just being, and by inspiring writers and artists for hundreds of years, Gypsies have kept alive and helped perfect to the highest degree the folk arts.

In Spain a great number are singers and improvisers of folk songs, and many of the best dancers are Gypsies. In Serbia, during the World War, certain regiments had their Gypsy bards who sang the songs of ancient heroes as they went into battle. In Russia troupes of Gypsy singers have always been in great demand. A band of Romanies danced before King James in Holyrood Palace. To every land they have brought delight in artistic expression.

Those of Hungary especially are the greatest



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folk-musicians in the world, according to Liszt, who paid them the sincerest form of compliment—that of imitating them. Liszt is only one of the great composers, from Haydn to Dvorak and Enescu, who have learned and borrowed from them. The debt which music owes this race of natural born artists is immense.

Gypsy music is an expression of the somber emotion of the Romani, and of his mad gaiety. It touches depths of pathos and heights of fierce joy. It is full of fire, passion, and wild yearning. In it all of Southeastern Europe has found a voice, the expression of an age-old longing to be free. It rises and falls like waves dashing against a cliff, or like the wind in a forest.

For the last seventy-five years writers have been saying that the Gypsy race has practically disappeared; and yet there are still some hundred thousand of them in various corners of the globe. For one who can read the Romani *patteran*, it is not difficult to find many of them who are, to use their own saying—"more Gypsy than the ribs of God." Only prosperity and kind treatment can wipe them out, for all laws against them have failed.

Every year more and more travel in automobiles; but this does not mean that they have become less Gypsy. As a rule it is the wildest and most roving who have adopted this improved

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means of wandering. On the other hand, the advent of the motor car has tended to make a Gypsy of the *Gajo*. Many a summer cottage has been given up, and many a home mortgaged in answer to the call of the road. The war, too, has had the effect of spreading the Romani spirit. Many an ex-service man, working in a stuffy factory or office, day in, day out, regrets camp life, its ever-changing scenes, and the great outdoors. He would agree with the Gypsy, Sylvester Boswell, who gave the following simple, forceful reason for preferring his tent to a house: "On account of health, sweetness of the air, and to enjoy the pleasure of nature's life."

Nowhere may the true Romani types be studied better than in America. To this country have come in large numbers the most nomadic, the ones that have best preserved the ancient language and customs.

They have come here from every part of the world except Spain. Reclining on cushions on the floor, I have eaten Christmas dinner, cooked by Serbian Gypsies in the fireplace of an old French house in New Orleans; I have lazed through summer days in Wisconsin, in the tents of English *Romaničels*, watching the shadows make moving patterns on the canvas overhead; and in Pennsylvania I have drunk and feasted with Hungarian Gypsies to the sound of their

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thrilling music; but to mingle with the Spanish Gypsies I have had to go to the Iberian Peninsula. Nowhere is the Romani seen to better advantage; nowhere does he play a larger role in the life of the people than in the former land of the Moors, a land that is still half Oriental, a land where romance lingers.

## Chapter II

### *Gypsies in Sun and Shadow*

#### THE PYRENEES AND BARCELONA

**T**HE Arrasas Valley in upper Aragon is one of the most beautiful in the world. Aside from the king and his friends, who use it as a game preserve, few Spaniards even know it, though it combines the marvels of the Grand Canyon, the Yosemite, and Glacier Park. Its perpendicular sides are stained a dark red, while great streaks of black and orange are daubed across the higher strata, crowned with the bluish white of everlasting snowfields. Rising in mighty cliffs and buttresses, the rocky walls assume fantastic shapes: lowering castles and cathedrals lifting their battlements and spires half a mile above the meadows and pine groves of the valley floor.

The morning sun was slanting down the deep gorge. It shone in the clear springs leaping from the green sod, on patches of purple iris, and on whole slopes which some unknown mountain flower had covered with its far-flung gold.

Much as I had been moved by the wonder of the heights and the loveliness of the vale, it was

more the sheer joy of wandering that I felt that first morning in Spain, as I walked along the rough trail above the waters of the Ordessa, that were frisking seaward, flashing in the sunlight, hurdling over boulders, and dashing head over heels from high embankments as though drunk with delight at escaping from their long imprisonment in the glaciers of Monte Perdido. With all my belongings in a rucksack, I was free to rove how-so-ever and where-so-ever fancy might whisper. My only plan was to go where there were Gypsies; and Gypsies may be found almost anywhere in Spain.

In the shadow of the pines, banks of wild strawberries, delicious and fragrant, glowing like rubies in the moist grass, tempted me to stop; but the longing to be among the Romanies once more kept me from halting. The words of a Wander-lied came to my mind as I walked.

“Wandering, O wandering, O care-free youthful quest!

The breath of God blows lightly, so fresh within my  
breast;

My heart could sing and shout for joy to where the sky’s  
unfurled:

‘Your beauty is wonderful, O wide, wide world!’ ”

With a Gavarnie guide I had crossed the border from France at a height of nearly eleven thousand feet, and had descended into the valley at its source, by a precipice too steep even for the smugglers of the region—to say nothing of



the gendarmes. The route had not been taken in years; and in the course of our thirty mile scramble we saw only a single person, a shepherd on a distant mountainside. It was fortunate, for my guide did not have a passport and was liable to arrest.

The nearest railway was some eighty miles from the frontier. After continuing for a while on foot, I tried riding in a tartana, a sort of two-wheeled gypsy van. Early one morning, looking from the tartana, I saw two strange-looking individuals, with a monkey capering about on a chain. The men were making their toilet under a tree, where they had evidently passed the night, sleeping, as the French say, "at the Sign of the Beautiful Star."

I had read an article in an English review claiming that the Gitanos are not Gypsies but Egyptians, and even going so far as to say that they are a certain race of Egyptians, the Copts. There is not a particle of truth in the statement; but the article had interested me because it mentioned a separate race of primitive nomads in Spain, the *Úngaros*, which it asserted were the true Gypsies. I had been looking forward to meeting this wild people; and suddenly it dawned on me that these exotic creatures, without even a tent to shelter them from the cold mountain air, were *Úngaros*.

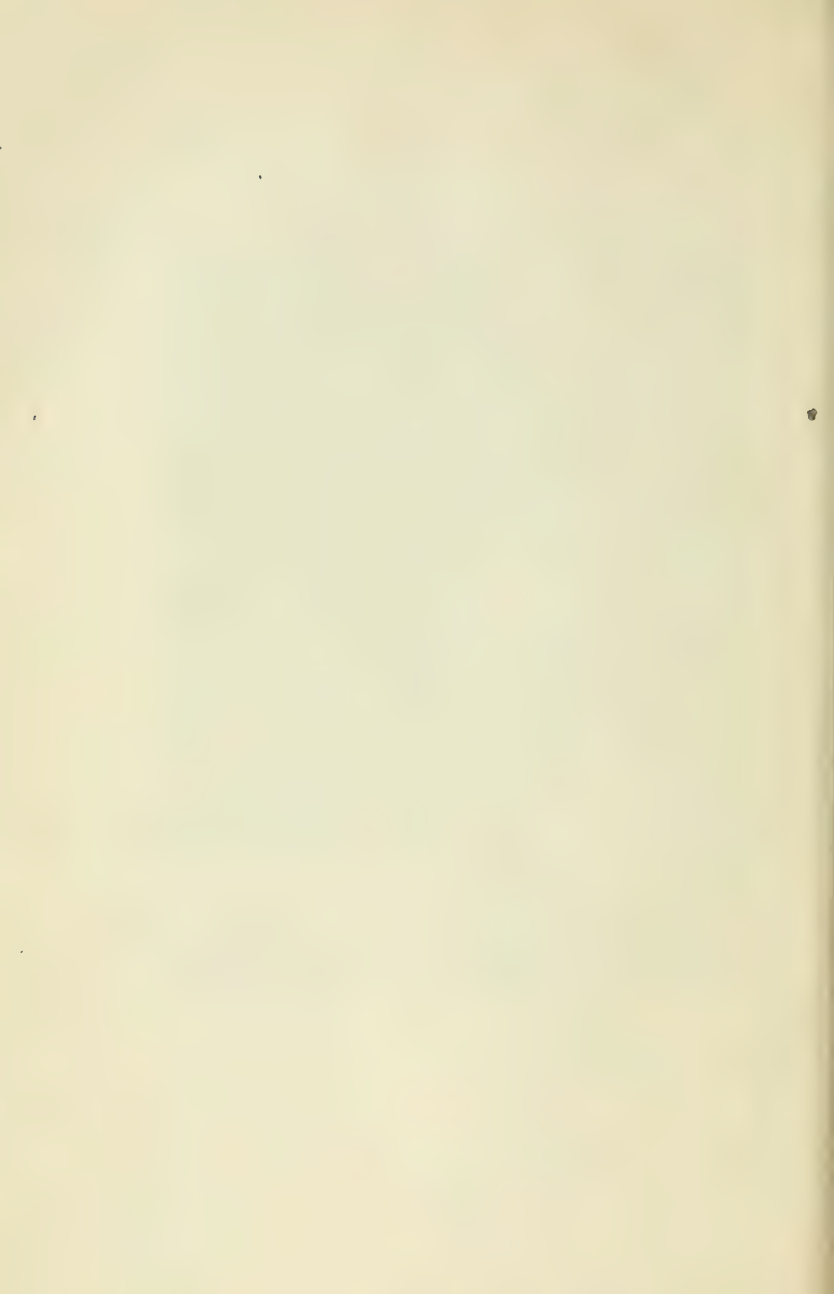
Why I did not stop the tartanero and talk with





*A Sort of Two-wheeled  
Gypsy Van*





them I do not know. They were the only ones I saw during the entire trip. As I learned from the Gitanos, they are Gypsies likewise. They are probably from Transylvania or Roumania. What were they doing in this valley? Doubtless they were on their way to France, by some furtive route over the mountain barrier, where they could avoid the guards and would not have to show passports.

During the World War, Central Europe was mystified by the sudden disappearance of thousands of Gypsies. It is possible that many of them scaled the Pyrenees into the Peninsula at points known only to themselves.

Traveling thus on foot, by tartana, and auto-stage, I reached Monzón, where I caught the midnight correo for Barcelona.

The capital of Cataluña is a city of charming contrasts: intensely practical and semi-mad, half French, half Spanish, and wholly Catalanian. It is a city where the twentieth century walks arm in arm with the Middle Ages, a city where men work by day and play by night. Las Ramblas, the principal street, is one of rushing business, and is also a promenade and a flower market. Here one sees the sons of wealthy manufacturers riding in the latest type of racing car, and women of the people carrying their water jars on their shoulders to fill them at the fountains as in ancient times. Narrow lanes

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that are mere slits between somber buildings open on the Paralelo, one of the widest avenues in the world. There lofty chimneys rise above places of amusement; and at five o'clock in the morning I have seen streams of workmen on their way to work mingling with crowds of other workers still gaily dancing on the broad thoroughfare, or pouring from the numerous night resorts that line the way.

I know no city where life is more intense and unsuppressed. "The greed for gold and pleasure," so characteristic of Paris, according to Balzac, is even more feverish and universal here. Except for its mid-day siesta Barcelona never seems to sleep. It is a paradise for Gypsies; and they flock here from all parts of Spain, attracted by the atmosphere of gaiety.

The evening of my arrival I was sitting at a table in front of a café, where a hundred or more men and women were enjoying the first coolness of the air, and taking their appetizer of vermouth and olives. A motley collection of the parasites that infest every Spanish city passed in a never-ending procession. A legless beggar dragged his trunk along the dusty pavement. An emaciated vendor of lottery tickets shuffled by in rags, crying: "The winning number! Remember it! Buy it now or weep to-morrow!" A blind woman with a guitar halted and sang the latest ballad describing the

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bloody death of Gallito. There was a continual invasion of old men and urchins with cans and pouches, peering amid the feet of the passers-by, and between the tables, snatching up cigarette ends before they were half extinguished.

What a contrast between all these human derelicts and two women who were walking along with erect, lithe bodies and swinging step! One of them wore a bright Manila shawl, the ends crossed over her bosom and knotted behind her back. The other had a black shawl with long silk fringe that swayed gracefully with the undulations of her hips. They stopped and bent over several tables to say something to the drinkers in a low tone. The flash of the smile and the knowing gleam in the eye told me they were Gypsies. They stopped at my table and asked to tell my fortune or say a lucky charm for a peseta. I answered them in *Caló*, and asked them where I could find "our people"; but they gave equivocal replies and passed on, looking puzzled. Perhaps they thought I was a *xundunaro*, a police agent, for as I learned later, not a few Spaniards of different classes, including some policemen, have learned Gypsy.

The next afternoon, walking through the old section of the city, near the harbor, I observed a dark-skinned lad skylarking with a one-eyed woman of middle age. This time it was less the features than the affectionate playfulness with



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which he treated the older woman, and their utter lack of self-consciousness that revealed the Gitanos. I spoke to him in *Caló*, and this time my joy in finding a Gypsy awakened in him a delight no less genuine than my own. He answered me, saying: "I don't know much *Caló*; but talk to my mother here. She knows everything."

I invited them to a café. They did not care for anything but coffee. "I like it because it is black like our people," said the woman, playing on the word black, *Caló*, by which the Gypsies call themselves and their language. Over the coffee we discussed "the affairs of Egypt." They traveled in the spring and fall through Catalonia. The boy, Diego, made a bare living shearing dogs and mules; and the mother eked out their existence in any way that presented itself. When they said good-bye they made me promise to visit them the next day in the Calle de Mediodía.

I found them there, with a number of other Gypsies. The older people were squatting on the shady side of the pavement; and the children were playing about stark naked. They were all quite as unconscious of their surroundings in the squalid street as though they had been in the middle of a forest. Diego was polishing a copper medal until it looked like gold.

The Calle de Mediodía is a noisome street in a noisome slum. I have never seen any in Naples, or in Chicago's "murder belt," or in the



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East End of London to compare with it. Even Dorset and Duval in that "city of dreadful night" are tame in contrast to this street of horrors which blatantly exposes its festering plague spots to the full glare of southern sunlight.

Some such scene as this must have suggested to Dante his description of the Tenth *Bolgia*, the gorge in Hell where falsifiers of metals are punished. I had a vision of the poet standing as though numb with pity and horror, staring as though fascinated by the ghastly sight of desperate creatures clawing at their bodies "be-spotted o'er with scabs," as if in midsummer the sick from various pestilential regions had been gathered together in a single moat.

"Such was it here, and such a stench came from it  
As from putrescent limbs is wont to issue."

It was barely noon, yet even then unhappy women were standing in front of fetid dens, pleading with passing soldiers from the nearby barracks for a chance to sell their miserable bodies for a few pennies. Through the broad doors of wineshops one could see crowds of toughs, drinking and playing cards. A sickening odor like that from a cage of carrion vultures drifted into the street. And in the eyes of the players was the keen hard glance of the vulture. "They are *rande*, thieves," said my Gypsy friend, noting my curiosity. "Son los de las uñas, the

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men with claws. They are passing the time until it gets dark enough to work."

Down a side street I caught a glimpse of the Montjuich, that rises above this portion of the city. Crowning the coffin-shaped headland was the fort which, ten years before, had witnessed the death of Francisco Ferrer, the teacher of children, the Don Quixote of the social revolution who had fought the ignorance and poverty that breeds the slum. He was killed by a firing squad without trial, standing, at his own request, unblindfolded, with open eyes unflinching, facing the sun.

The Gypsies lived in this nauseating neighborhood because they were outcasts of society. They were not in the least affected by it, however. The *Gajo* world was not their own. Chastity and loyalty to one another was their Gypsy creed that saved them from contamination. If the stupid *Gajos* wanted to pull one another deeper and deeper into a morass of their own making, it did not concern them. They were indeed lilies growing in the mud—tiger lilies.

"Cousin!" said the one-eyed woman, turning to me, "dinner is ready. *Čalamos po xalá!*" I followed my friends through a dark doorway beside a wineshop, and with eyes still dazzled by the blinding glare outside, I felt my way up several unlighted flights of stairs. We entered a

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room that was bare except for a heap of clothes in one corner and a charcoal brazier over which a stew of beans and potatoes was cooking. Proud of the fact that his family did not sleep in the streets, and anxious to tell me what rent he was paying, Diego asked how much it cost at my hotel. "Seventy-five cents a day," I answered.

"Why!" he exclaimed, "that is all I pay for two weeks!"

As we squatted on the floor around the stew, they apologized for not having any meat in it, and felt quite hurt that I only ate a little. As a matter of fact, I had just had lunch. I was sorry, since the meagerness of the meal was more than compensated by the intensity of their desire to be hospitable.

Wishing to introduce me to others "of the blood," the entire family escorted me that afternoon to where some true Gypsies, *calé de čačipé* were camping in a sort of no-man's-land near the new bull ring. They were wandering basket-makers, canasteros, and even poorer, if possible, than the mule-clippers. Some were living under sheets of canvas stretched beside a wall. A family of fifteen was crowded into the windowless cellar of a deserted house. Others had no shelter whatsoever for their few belongings, and were sitting in the biting sun.

Nevertheless, they were very friendly, and

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those who were working stopped their basket weaving to entertain "their American brother." A boy was sent to fetch some aguardiente, a drink that looks like water, smells like absinthe, and tastes like liquid fire. The bottle had been provided with a perforated stopper. I was expected to hold it at arm's length, and throw my head back in an attitude of abandon while a burning stream played against my palate. Fortunately, I missed aim, and the vitriolic aguardiente did nothing worse than wet my chin. The Gypsies roared good-naturedly at my awkwardness.

One of the boys got a cracked guitar and twanged the strings while another sang a *bulería*:

"La gitana y el gitano  
Cuando traen un vesti'o,  
No se le quitan del cuerpo  
Hasta que sea rompi'o.

"When Gypsy girls and Gypsy men  
Put on a garment that is new,  
They never take it off again  
Until it falls in two."

The lining of the one suit I had on the trip was a mass of shreds. When the song was finished I opened my coat and showed my rags and tatters. "*Caló de čaćipé!* Cousin, you're as Gypsy as the ribs of God!" one of them exclaimed, while the others laughed with delight.

I took out some castanets that I had bought that morning, and asked him to show me how to

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play them. "We never use any but these," he replied, snapping his fingers as he did a step or two of fandangillo. "If only my little girls were here!" he said regretfully. "They dance like angels. Come back and see them in a couple of weeks—they'll be out of jail!"

"If you want to see some real Gypsy dancing go to the Café Villa Rosa," Diego remarked. "They are all Gypsies except the waiters. Even the owner is a *Caló*."

After thanking the canasteros for their entertainment I returned to the Ramblas with Diego and his family. Just before parting, the one-eyed Gypsy asked me to lend her *dui luas*, a two-peseta piece. "We have made no money to-day and have nothing to eat for supper. I shall give it back next time you come to visit us." I did not see them again for six weeks, and had forgotten about it. But the moment she spied me she started to hand me the coin. My refusal to accept it hurt her feelings. The proverbial pride of the Spanish hidalgo is nothing compared to that of the Gypsy.

That night I searched for the Café Villa Rosa a long time in the maze of narrow lanes near the harbor, until I came across it—only to be told that it did not open for three hours. It was then eleven o'clock.

About three in the morning I started back. Overhead, between walls of opaque blackness, a



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narrow ribbon of translucent sky was visible with a star or two: luminous landmarks, the same the world over, that make the Gypsy feel at home wherever he goes—even in the slum. As I passed, women beckoned from dark doorways. In one place the gloom was shot with streaks of light from behind closed blinds; and the click of coins against a croupier's rake pricked the silence. Just beyond, a building arched across the dim street. I had arrived at the Villa Rosa.

A well-dressed man barred the entrance. As he looked from my scarecrow hat to hemp sandals he said gruffly, "This is a private club," and pointed to the sign, "Sociedad recreativa." In Spain it is proper to appear in society without a necktie, but to wear hemp sandals, alpargatas, stamps one as being of the people. One is a gentleman as long as he wears shoes.

I asked him in Gypsy if he was the proprietor. He looked at me in astonishment, then took my outstretched hand. We chatted for a while in *Caló*. "This is a café for wealthy señoritos. I wouldn't let my own father in with alpargatas; but you are a foreign Gypsy. It is different." With ceremonious cordiality he showed me to a seat where I could see everything.

A flood of brilliant light filled the long room. On the walls were painted in flamboyant colors characteristic scenes of Andalusian life. At the far end was a stage. Men and women, a few in



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evening clothes, were seated in comfortable arm chairs at wicker tables, on which stood bottles of Jerez, sherries that held imprisoned the mellow sunlight of Andalusian summers, liquid gold, wine which, as Blasco Ibáñez has written, "for the very reason that it is the glory of God, costs dearly." Nothing so vulgar as champagne for these gallants. They demanded something that was more of their native soil, something racier and more elemental, something that would enable them to throw off the cloak of civilization and condense a year of life into a single night: wine of Jerez—and Gypsies.

Mingling with the guests were the singers and dancers: Gitanos in tight trousers with short jackets, and frilled shirts with filigree gold studs at the throat; Gitanas in beautiful Manila shawls—so Spanish and yet so Oriental—with fragrant jasmine blossoms in their black hair.

Nowhere, save in Russia and Hungary, do the Gypsies fascinate the wilder members of the aristocracy to the same degree, making them forget everything, ready to throw away their fortunes, their names, and their very lives merely to please these children of nature. The very fact that these bewitching girls never even grant a kiss, drives these wealthy Spaniards to desperation. The Romanies are the true aristocrats: enchanting but aloof, captivating, intoxicating but proud and unsubmissive.

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In Merimée's novel, *Carmen*, from which the opera was taken, this spirit of Gypsy deviltry is well portrayed. In one thing, however, *Carmen* is not a typical *Calí*. She gives herself to a *Gačó*, like the Gitana whom Merimée intimates that he had for a sweetheart, and who must have been an outcast—isolated from her own people.

At four in the morning the entertainment proper began. Seven of the Gypsies took seats in a semi-circle on the stage, and one after the other rose and danced to the accompaniment of the guitar and singing. Two of the most famous dancers of all Spain were there in the room that night, Gypsies with European reputations, who command high salaries in the theaters of London, Paris and Petrograd; but what interested me more than their art was their personalities, and their effect on the Spaniards about them.

The brother of three of the dancers sat at my table. "That is Paquita," said my companion. "Her father was the best guitar player of his day." He indicated a handsome Gitana with soft, graceful curves, who was dancing with extraordinary fire and languor. The slow, undulatory swaying of her body held the *Gačé* in a sort of swoon, while the swift stamp of her heels and the sudden sinuous flowing of her arms, that seemed to beckon and caress, played on their emotions like a lash, waking them to a passionate burst of enthusiasm.

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When the entertainment was over, the Gitanos mingled again with the drinkers at the tables, or tangoed with them, being no less adept at modern society dances than at their own. The aim of the Gypsies was to create an atmosphere of wild gaiety, to drink and have the señoritos drink as much of the "liquid gold" as possible, in order to fill the proprietor's pockets—and indirectly their own. There are many strange professions, but that of earning one's bread by drinking is certainly one of the strangest. They were skilled workers.

The *Gačé* ordered endlessly, and as the hours passed they yielded more and more to the Gypsy gracia, that mingling of grace, magnetic charm, and piquant wit which is the pride of the Andalusian, and the especial possession of the Gitana. Pepita, who had just finished devouring "à belles dents," a plate of crabs, got up and danced a spirited alegría beside one of the tables. A young, aristocratic looking Barcelonese was gazing on her in a whirlwind of passion, while an older companion watched her spellbound in a sweet stupor. As she ended the dance, throwing back her head with the traditional gesture of hauteur, I knew that the look of scorn that burned in her eyes was real.

In her semi-Oriental costume the handsome *Calí*, showing her white teeth, smiled at her victims, who were applauding her frantically. As

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she stood there she was the incarnation of the Hindu Goddess of Destruction, known as Kali, the black (for in this word the Sanskrit and Gypsy are identical). The Mahabharata, the 500 B.C. Hindu epic calls her: "thou black one," "beautiful colored," "wearing yellow garments, dark-eyed, loud-laughing, wolf-mouthed," and sings of her delight in spirituous liquor, flesh, and sacrificial victims.

The gods assume strange forms indeed, and move in wondrous ways.

A skylight overhead shone white with the dawn; but in the blaze of yellow light it passed unobserved. The señoritos were oblivious of everything save the lure of the Gypsies. An Andalusian marquis, a breeder of fighting bulls, who had come to Barcelona to see his toros show their courage in the coming corrida, upset a table in his unsteady efforts to seize a Gitana and make her dance with him. Above the wailing of the violins came startled cries, bursts of hysterical laughter, and the crash of glass.

At another table a Gaćó was throwing wine into the air in a stream of shimmering gold and catching it again.

In one corner two men in evening dress had risen to their feet and were growling and snapping threats at each other. In a moment they were the center of a mass of excited Spaniards swaying and eddying about them. A Gypsy



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girl, Frasca, had freed herself from the group and was standing motionless, looking on.

A woman sobbed.

I got up to get a closer look. "Sit down!" exclaimed Curro. "Act as though nothing had happened! *Abilya*, Dolores! *Kela!*" he called to a *Calí* in Gypsy. Dolores heard and began to dance a bulería amid cries of encouragement from the other Gitanos at our table: "¡Olé! ¡Olé! ¡Qué gracia! ¡Mira! ¡Mira! ¡Mira!" The room was shrill with shouts.

A pair of policemen entered. Immediately there was a hush. The two men, who had grappled, disentangled themselves, and everyone took their seats. After a few questions the police left. "It was only a quarrel over *Varia*," Curro said, with a smile. "It happens every night. It's lucky that gentlemen don't carry knives!" The festivities continued, a bit wilder, a bit gayer.

It was six o'clock before any of the tables were empty. Gradually as the señoritos left, the number of Gypsies about my table kept increasing. I called to the waiter to bring a bottle of Jerez, but he refused. I was puzzled until the proprietor himself whispered in my ear that I was his guest and he could not let me spend my money. I persuaded the waiter finally to bring it, and our table soon became the center of gaiety.

A Spanish woman with fine features worn by dissipation walked by us on her way to the cloak

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room. "Señora!" one of the Gypsy girls called to her, imperatively. "I must tell your fortune."

"All right," the woman laughed, and held out her palm. "But I sha'n't believe a word of it." A look of horror spread over the dark face of the Gitana gazing into the open hand; and raising her eyes she fixed the woman with a look that sobered her. "What do you see?"

"I'm afraid to say."

"Tell me!" Even the Gypsies, who had been grinning with amusement, were awed.

"I see two deaths." The pallid features of the señora became a ghastly white, and her eyes dilated. Her face was a startling contrast to that of the Romani's: the one of marble, frozen in fear, the other of bronze, serene and dominating, a statue of fate.

The señora took her aside, and they talked in low tones. When they parted the woman was calmer. The prophetess came back and told us how she had observed that the woman was going to be a mother, and how she had frightened her into taking care of herself. "Her lover has left her; but she wants the child very much. She will go the country to-morrow. Another week of this life would have killed her."

There was something strange about the Gypsy girl that made me wonder. She was dressed like the rest, and had danced like them, but she spoke Spanish with an accent and somewhat brokenly.



"That is Varia. She is a Russian Gypsy," said Curro, as though reading my thoughts.

"*Peya! Rusiakro Rom san tu?*" I exclaimed in Russian Gypsy, delighted at seeing a Slavic Romani in Barcelona. "How did you come here? *Sar avelyan khate?*" She sat down, and gradually the sound of *Romanes*, spoken as she had not heard it for years, awakened memories.

"Some Spanish *Calé* came to Petersburg, and danced in the theater there. Dionisio was one. I saw him—and I loved him. But my father would not let us marry because Dionisio could not pay him five thousand roubles that he asked. I could not leave Russia without a passport; so I go to the Chief of Police, and say, 'My father is trying to sell me to be a bad woman.' I don't like to say that, because I love my father—but I love Dionisio more. The police feel sorry, and give me the passport. I leave Petersburg for Paris with the *Calé*.

"Dionisio promise not to touch me, but he does not keep his word. Then he refuse to marry me. He say, 'You do wrong. You fool your father—maybe you fool me!' But the *Calé* say, 'You are no Gypsy if you do not make her your *romni*.' So he marry me.

"But he is afraid I no be true wife; and he feel very sad, and drink very much. One day he lock me in my room, with nothing to wear but my *gad*. Another time he strike me, so that my

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face bleed. A *Gajo* see him, and make him stop; but I say, 'Don't touch him! It is his right; he is my husband.' "

The young, aristocratic-looking Barcelonese, the last to go, staggered toward our table and tried to kiss Varia good night. "*Devla mar tu!* God strike you!" she muttered. Then as he turned to leave, she smiled alluringly:

"But ah, the den of wild things  
In the darkness of her eyes."

The orchestra had long since left; but none of the Gypsies in the circle made a move to go home. "We are all *Calé* here!" one of them called out joyously. Like children after a party, or like actors after a play, they wanted to be their real selves again.

Toño, who felt that he had missed his calling, and should have been a bull-fighter instead of a dancer, had picked up a napkin from the table, and holding it like the cape of a torero, was executing with marvelous grace and dexterity certain "passes" he had witnessed at the last corrida. The singers danced, and the dancers sang. Each one made up for his lack of technique by his spontaneity and joy in the doing. Varia sang a plaintive Russian Gypsy song. It had a sort of haunting sadness, but was more melodious than the Spanish Gypsy songs, and very sweet.

"Dionisio is waiting in the café by the harbor,"

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she said. "Let's go and sup with him!" Breakfast would have been a more appropriate term, as it was then about eight o'clock.

"I'm going to get some sleep," replied Toño. "There is a bull fight this afternoon. Good-bye!" I went off with him and Curro. Before going to bed we took a stroll in the Rambla de las Flores. The sun was shining obliquely through the trees that met in an arch above the promenade, flecking the pavement with splashes of swaying light. On either side the flower stands were banked high with bouquets of jasmine and lilies, deep red roses and carnations. Like a frisky colt, Curro sniffed the perfumes in the morning air that brought a longing for the open fields; and snapping his fingers, he tossed his stiff-brimmed Cordova hat in the air. The passers-by and the flower girls smiled at him, and he turned to us with a laugh that as much as said: "Isn't it good to be alive!"

## Chapter III

### *Laughing Cadiz*

**B**Y its continuous round of festivals and fairs Spain has indeed deserved the name of "Land of Joy." Spaniards are thought of as being lazy, but no people, save the Gypsies, are busier and more energetic—in amusing themselves. I learned that a Summer Fiesta was being held in Cadiz, and thither I went, all the way across the Peninsula, for I knew that I should find Gitanos at one of these popular celebrations.

As the train passed Seville, I had a desire to break the long, hot trip in the gay capital of Andalusia; but I did not, as I was afraid of missing the festival. Sitting in the train I thought of an experience I had had there eight years before. For days I had looked for Gypsies in vain, both in Seville proper and across the river in Triana, the so-called Gypsy suburb. Finally I found some in a little wineshop, near where a tablet in the wall commemorates the site of the thieves' den in Cervantes' famous tale, *Rinconete y Cortadillo*.

Since the days of Cervantes the district had not changed much, unless for the worse. But the Gitanos here had become like *Gajos*, and

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could not speak their own language. Consequently they did not accept my statement that I spoke Gypsy and was one of them. Two Gitanillas, nine or ten years old, were dancing a *danse du ventre* with devilish spirit, urged on by shouts from a crowd of foreign sailors, and local majos, roisterers of none too prepossessing an appearance.

The following evening, under the broad palm trees of the Plaza Nueva, I was watching a group of little boys playing at bull fighting, when I was accosted by a Gypsy who had seen me in the Triana wineshop. I accepted his proposal that we go to the theater together; but there was something in his look and voice that put me on my guard. However, my suspicions gradually waned. At two o'clock in the morning I went with him to see the fighting bulls driven into the corral of the Plaza de Toros for the next day's corrida.

It is an interesting operation, rarely witnessed, as it takes place at a time when the streets are deserted. It was more thrilling than I had bargained for. The savage creatures could easily have leaped or thrust aside the flimsy barriers erected on the pavement; and the only real obstacles between them and us were the mounted herdsman with their pikes.

I had had enough excitement by this time, but my companion insisted that we enter a near-by



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café cantante, which was reached by a long passageway. The place was picturesque enough with its gaudy bull fight posters, explosions of color, and its low-vaulted ceiling; but the men and women were of the worst type.

My proposal that we leave was greeted by strange objections that revived my suspicions. Outside again the quay was dark and silent. The herdsmen had gone. We passed along under the trees, between the somber river and the black, curving outline of the bull ring. Not a soul was in sight.

Suddenly my companion stopped, and demanded my money. As he did so he pulled out a huge knife that opened with an ominous click. I was unarmed; and no one could have heard my cries. The river was handy. It was a time for strategy. Pretending that I had not seen the knife and had not understood the nature of his demand, I told him that I could not lend him much just then, but that I had plenty of money at the hotel, and would meet him the next day. He was satisfied, and carefully concealed the knife, saying that he would meet me the following evening at the Triana bridge.

By noon I had left the city.

That was eight years ago. And it all came back to me, as I sat and watched the bleak landscape.

It was late at night when I arrived in Cadiz.



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With my rucksack on my back I started out to find a hotel. For some time I wandered in unavailing search. At one place the proprietor looked me over as though suspicious, asked me what I had to sell in my pack, and sent me away. Finally, as I passed along the sidewalk, a man with dark features came up to me and offered to show me a place to sleep. There was no name over the doorway to indicate a hotel, but he took me up several flights of stairs to a long room with a row of beds as in a hospital. On one of them he laid my rucksack. At least it was better than spending the night in the streets.

Next door was a wineshop, where I could get a supper. The tout followed me uninvited, and sat down opposite at the table. He seemed to be studying me. I poured out a glass of wine for the fellow and asked if there were many Gypsies in Cadiz. He hesitated for a moment, then answered, "I am one."

Here was luck—a Gypsy the first thing! "Isn't there a *café de cante flamenco*?" I asked. He shook his head, but said that we might find some Gitano singers in a place he knew of. He took me through a labyrinth of narrow streets to a dim hall. In one corner was an orchestra of blind guitar players. The floor was of mud that had been tramped to the consistency of stone by generations of dancers. On the walls were

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the ever-present posters of bull fights, the one bright note in the entire establishment.

The aspect of the hall was no less sinister than that of the people who were dancing in couples, or drinking at little tables. The women were majas, and the men looked as though they might have been cutthroats. "I thought I might find some of our people here, and organize a little entertainment, a juergacita," my Gypsy guide offered by way of explanation.

The place reminded me of the *café cantante* in Seville; and some hidden memory began to stir, struggling for expression. What else was there that seemed familiar, I wondered, as we found ourselves once more out in the deserted street?

My companion stopped, and came close to me, peering into my face. "I have seen you somewhere before," he said, as though he too were searching his memory. "I remember!" he exclaimed in an odd tone. And suddenly there flashed before my mind the picture of the Gypsy in Seville, on the quay near the bull ring, holding a long knife in his hand and demanding my money.

It was he.

There was no one in the streets.

It was a quarter of Cadiz inhabited chiefly by workmen and fishermen, who had long since gone to bed, closing their doors and windows with

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bars and shutters. There was no light save from a near-by street lamp, that cast our shadows monstrously distorted along the cobblestones. I was alone with the Gypsy who had drawn his knife against me in Seville.

When he had said we would meet again, I had smiled to myself at the success of my stratagem in putting him off, little thinking that I should ever see him. Yet there he was! What was he thinking? What was he going to do? Mechanically the senses took in every detail of the scene; but the mind refused to work. It did not even occur to me to reach in my pocket for the knife I had bought for just such an emergency. But what use would it have been against a fellow whom I had seen draw his own in such a deft, professional way? More than once he must have had opportunities of acquiring skill with the gruesome weapon.

To my great relief, he smiled, as he quietly remarked: "It's strange I didn't recognize you before. And to think I once took you for an 'Ingrés'!" as much as to say, "for legitimate prey." Further than this he never referred to his attempt to hold me up. It was a delicate matter. During the week that I remained in Cadiz we became close companions; but even among friends certain subjects are sometimes best left undiscussed.

As we walked toward the Plaza Isabel Segunda

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he told me how soon after I had met him in the Andalusian capital he had suddenly left that city never to return, and how he had made two equally unpremeditated trips, one to England, and another to Cuba. His reasons in each case must have been extremely urgent. It seemed discreet not to question him too closely. Meanwhile he had married and was living in Cadiz on what he earned as boarding-house runner, or crimp, as his *obvious* means of support. That he had other sources of income I had no doubt. How could he explain my being in Spain without any visible means of support—unless I were a crook? But he, too, preserved a discreet silence.

His knowledge of Gypsy had been gained from the Cadiz Gypsies and from his wife, a Gitana from Cordova, where the language is more commonly spoken than in Seville.

In spite of the late hour two Gypsies were still loafing about the Plaza: an old woman looking like Frans Hals' "Witch of Harlem," and a boy with a thick shock of hair protruding from underneath his cap and almost hiding his beady eyes. The old Gitana was merry with the manzanilla she had been drinking at the expense of a Spaniard whose fortune she had just told. We approached her, and Frasco spoke to her, saying that I was "one of the blood." She gave me a contemptuous glance, and spat out the words,

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“Es *Payo* rubio!” Everyone in Spain whose hair is not jet black is a “blond.” Wine had made her frank, or she would not have failed to conceal her thoughts like a true Gypsy. Frasco was laughing silently at the way the woman had been deceived by my appearance, just as he had. Piqued, I said to her in Spanish, “Are you a *Gitana*?”

“To the very bones!” she proudly replied.

“*Min bato sinela Bu’nó*, pero *Menda sinelo Caló* como *min dai*! My father is a Gentile but I am a Gypsy like my mother,” I replied, in the Romani of her country, no less proudly.

“¡Olé! ¡Olé! Hurrah! Hurrah!” she shouted, convinced that I was one of them, and highly delighted.

Half in earnest, half pretending to be nettled still at being called a *Bu’nó*, I continued vehemently: “Even if my face isn’t as dark as yours, my blood is as black. Look!” Here I made as though to tear my wrist open with my teeth, but she grasped my arm to stop me, crying, “¡Olé! ¡Olé! Cousin, I believe you!”

The shock-haired boy had approached to see what was going on, and accidentally had brushed against me. Overhearing the remarks, he added: “You’re one of us, alright! I happened to feel your knife; the *Bu’né* have revolvers, but we always carry a *čurí*.” When asked what I did for a living, I replied, “*Xoxabo lo’ Bu’né*. I



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cheat the Gentiles." This reply, and others by the "Witch" herself, she punctuated with the invariable cries of "¡Olé ¡Olé!" "Come," she said, "let's have a drink on the Spaniard over there. I told him he was going to get some money some day—and he's spending it already." To have refused would not have been in accordance with my role.

As we walked away, the "Witch" burst into a song

“¡ Todo' lo' *Gačé*, todo' lo' *Gačé*  
Se vean frito' en un sarte'!

“May all the Gentiles to a man  
Be fried together in a pan!”

A policeman overhearing her and not relishing the sentiment, made her stop. When he had passed, she turned and made a face at him behind his back.

Promising to go with Frasco next day to meet his family and all the other Gypsies in the Santa María Quarter, I said good-bye to him and the "Witch." "By the way!" he called after me, "you won't be entirely among *Bu'né* in the Fonda. The moza, who looks after the rooms and does the cooking, is a Gitana."

I found my bed. It looked as though the last occupant had been a coal heaver, so I did not undress, but lay down on the outside, and went to sleep amid the gurgling sounds coming from



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the throats of half a dozen fellow guests in the room.

When I awoke the next morning it was seven or eight o'clock, but the drawn blinds created a half light in which, to my sleepy eyes, the row of white iron beds seemed indeed like that of a hospital.

A group of peasants were putting on their clothes. From their conversation I gathered that they were going to take a boat that morning for Buenos Ayres, and were leaving their native land perhaps forever.

The moza came in and started to make up the beds. Neither she nor the men that were dressing paid the slightest attention to one another. To use a typical American expression, in many Spanish fondas one has about as much privacy as a goldfish. But the Spaniards have no more prudery in such matters than the Japanese or the South Sea Islanders.

The moza was pretty, but of a type more Spanish than Gypsy except for the Oriental cast of her almond eyes. She was greatly surprised, therefore, when I spoke to her in *Caló* as a Gitana, for not even the proprietor of the hotel knew that she belonged to that race. She was highly flattered when, to further mystify her, I told her that I knew she was "one of the blood" because no one but a Gypsy could have such grace. As she went about her work she sang to herself a song partly

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in *Caló*, a song that was evidently popular among the Cadiz Gitanos, for I heard it again in that city.

“¡Gitanita, mal *Cañí*!  
¿A que te sirve el cuchillo  
Si no tiene *caloči*?

“You’re no true Gypsy! Let us part!  
What good is it to have a knife  
If you haven’t any heart?”

It was a strange song, sung to a primitive air, a low, quavering wail. What did the words mean? There is a French poem by Leconte de Lisle, *Nurmahal*, taken from Hindu history and legend, in which a Hindu woman, in love with the Sultan, kills her husband before giving herself to her lover so that she may not betray her lord while he still lives.

One of the reasons I had come to Spain this time was to collect Spanish Gypsy folk songs and study the singers. I asked her if she knew many coplas. “Come to my house to-night,” she said. “I have a friend, Rosario, a *Cañí*, who sings beautifully.”

At a booth beside the harbor in the Plaza Isabel they were making buñuelos, a sort of fried cake made in long coils, and cut into any length desired. They are light and crisp, and with a cup of coffee they made an excellent breakfast, as I sat in front of the café beside the water. A boat with a lateen rig, such as is used in the Medi-

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terranean since the days of the Phœnicians, was lying beside the stone wharf, laden with golden melons from the vine-clad slopes of the mainland. There was none of the busy stir that the harbor must have witnessed when the caravels dropped anchor there, laden with gold from America. To-day the youths were leaving the sleepy city to go and find their gold in the New World, since it no longer comes to them here.

Cadiz gives no impression of its extraordinary age, founded by the Tyrians about 1100 B.C. Six different races have inhabited it since then; but it has always remained the same. To-day it must be much as in the time when Horace wrote an ode to a friend, saying:

“Septimus, thou who wouldst go with me as far as Cadiz. . . .

“Where spring is long, where Jupiter bestows mild winters, where the slopes of Aulon, beloved by fertile Bacchus, have no need of envying the vineyards of Falernus. . . .

“The place with its happy hills is calling thee and me; there some day your tears will moisten the warm ashes of a poet friend.”

The Roman nobles, once as numerous here as in any city except Rome itself, are gone, and so are the improbæ Gaditanæ, whose dancing roused the enthusiasm of those Roman nobles; but in their stead are the graceful, fiery Gypsies. And if the Falernian wine that delighted Horace has lost its flavor, that of the hillsides across the bay is still the finest in the world, and spurs the

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Gypsy dancers on to wilder steps and fiercer mirth.

With its tall, white buildings crowned by look-outs, miradores, Cadiz rises from the sea, suspended between the azure gulfs of sky and water. All day its silver walls lie basking in the sun, dreaming of the cool caress of evening when love and pleasure will stir again, and songs will float along the ocean breeze amid the tinkle of fountains in marble basins and the twang and trill of the guitar. Then she will be again the foam-born Aphrodite rising with white limbs from the sea.

After a supper of sea-food and excellent Jerez in the Sacristía, a restaurant with little booths around a large patio, I met Frasco and told him I was going with the moza to hear a friend of hers sing. "Cousin," he said, "I would not go if I were you. Her father was a *Bu'nó*; and she was not taught to be faithful like one of our race. She is married to a *Caló*, who has reason to be jealous. Like all of us, he is hot-blooded. He might strike before he knew. . . ." It was unnecessary for Frasco to continue. I thought of her song:

"You're no true Gypsy! Let us part!  
What good is it to have a knife  
If you haven't any heart?"

"If you want to hear some singing," he added, "wait here at the Fonda until I come back."

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In a quarter of an hour he returned with an ancient victoria driven by a Gypsy cabby. Sitting in it were two more Gypsies, Paco and Perico, one a dancer, the other a singer. As one can walk across the city in any direction in about fifteen minutes, wheeled vehicles are almost as rare as in Venice, and a pure luxury. To ride in a carriage was evidently a great event.

Up and down we rode at top speed, the singer singing as loud as possible above the rattle and jumble of the wheels, while the rest of us accompanied the rhythm of the song with a thunder of handclaps that resounded through the narrow streets. From time to time we would stop in front of a café and send for a waiter to bring us glasses of wine, which we drank without getting out of the victoria. Of course the driver was not forgotten. We were all Gypsies together, laughing and singing like schoolboys on a holiday. Every now and then Paco would shout in honor of the supposed regal ancestor of the Gypsies: “¡Viva Faraón! Long live Pharaoh!”

Finally we dismissed the carriage and went into the back room of a café. “Can we sing and dance here?” Frasco asked the proprietor.

“You can do anything—but murder,” he replied.

While Frasco and I beat time, Perico sang a



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copla and Paco danced. Here is the song, which, like many in cante hondo, or deep style, is partly in Gypsy:

“Como *burele*’ bravos  
Terela calí el arranque.  
¡Solo acuérdate de mí  
Cuando me *terele* delante!

“You’re like the fiercest fighting bulls  
When stirred to fiery wrath;  
But don’t forget me, Gypsy girl,  
If I should cross your path!”

As the dancer swayed and stamped, working himself into a frenzy of passion, he pretended to slip, and fell to the floor. But without losing a single beat of the measure he was on his feet again, with head held high and fingers snapping, clicking his heels against the floor in a furious staccato.

The door opened and some friends of Frasco entered, a Gypsy in the uniform of the Spanish navy, with a girl, Felisa, who was half Gypsy. Passing, they had been attracted by the sound of a *juerga*. Of the thousands of Gypsies that I have met, I have only seen two others in uniform—and all three had been conscripted. The girl was a good singer, with a large repertory, and sang several *soleares* and *martinetes*. One of them, which I copied down, was extremely tragic.



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"Dale que mamar a ese niño  
De tu pecho leche blanco;  
Esta noche te veremos  
Con un cordel a la garganta.

"Take the child upon your breast;  
Give him of your milk so white.  
—With a rope around your neck  
We must see you hang to-night."

At Felisa's suggestion we paid the bill and went to the café cantante where I had been the night before. The same blind orchestra was playing, while the majos and majas danced on the hard mud floor. We talked of the various types of Spanish Gypsy folk songs, and Felisa sang a number of *carceleros*, prison songs, and followed them with *saetas*, religious lyrics sung during Holy Week when the sacred images pass in procession. Prison songs are among those most frequently sung by the *Gitanos*, and some of them are very expressive:

"Aunque estoy en el presidio  
Por tus malitos quereles,  
Más ganita de verte tengo  
Que salir de estas paredes.

"Although I'm here in prison  
Through your evil love for me,  
I'd rather see you once again  
Than even to be free."

In conjunction with this last song, and in this den, it was strange to hear a religious song; but

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it was sung in all reverence, as though it were the most natural thing in the world.

"A las dos de la madrugada  
Del templo viene saliendo  
La Virgen de la Esperanza  
Con su mantoncito bordado  
Y esa cara tan Gitana."

"The Virgen de la Esperanza comes  
From the church at dead of night.  
'Tis two o'clock the church bells strike.  
See her shawl so gay and bright,  
And her face so Gypsy-like!"

The Virgin of Hope is the object of a cult among a number of the Gypsy bull-fighters, whose lives are filled with constant longing, hoping for luck, hoping for fame, hoping to come forth unscathed from each rendezvous with death. Age, and the smoke of countless tapers rising with the prayers before her shrine, has given the Virgin's features a rich shade of Romani brown. Like Sainte Marie l'Egyptienne and Sarah, her companion at Les Saintes Maries in Provence, half-legendary beings whose names and origins have caused their adoption by the strolling Romani, La Virgen de la Esperanza has become a sort of Gypsy saint.

Frasco and the sailor had had enough of the place and decided to leave; but as this was a good opportunity to get some more songs, I remained. "You had better come," Frasco whispered. In

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the tone of his voice I caught the hint of some vague danger.

"I'm all right," I answered. "Isn't the girl, Felisa, a Gypsy?"

"Yes, a half-Gypsy," he replied. "But she is a *lumia*, a woman of the streets."

When my friends had gone Felisa got up and danced with a villainous-looking fellow who had been observing us from the other end of the room.

On her return she sang a fandangillo Gitano for me. It was a song of delicate feeling, full of suggestion in its simplicity:

"Los cristales de mi alcoba  
Los empañó con mi aliento.  
En ellos escribo tu nombre  
Para ver el desprecio,  
Que va con otro hombre.

"I stand here in my lonely room  
And breathe upon the clouded pane.  
I write your name upon the glass  
To meet your falseness with disdain. . . .  
It fades the way your love will pass."

The air was no less suggestive than the words, slowly and softly swelling—then dashing downward, like breakers in the surge. The lines of one of Baudelaire's *Fleurs du Mal* came to my mind:

"Musical strains that soothe and rend the heart, and seem the distant cry of human grief."

My reverie was abruptly broken by the demand: "Give me a couple of pesetas! I owe

## NIGHTS AND DAYS ON THE GYPSY TRAIL

them to my brother. He's the one I was just dancing with. He needs them now!" I was her debtor for the songs; but I hated to be lied to, so I refused. She danced with the man again; and I noticed that they were quarreling. The bully, for such he doubtless was, evidently was trying to get money from her. The next time he danced with another maja, who was ready to please him. Felisa arose furious, and approached the girl, her hands contracting like talons. The situation looked threatening.

I heard some one call to me. Frasco and the sailor were beckoning from the doorway. "Cousin!" he called. "Come with us! Let the *Gacé* fight it out!" I followed them. "We were afraid to leave you there," he continued. "You see I was right." As I walked along with them it seemed strange that the man who was protecting me thus was the very one who, back in Seville, before he believed that I was a Gypsy, had been ready to stab me for a few pesetas.

"To-morrow," he remarked, when we separated at the Hotel, "you will come to my house, where they are all true Gypsies."

The next afternoon we went to the Santa María Quarter, where most of the Gitanos live. We entered a patio so large that in order not to waste space another building had been erected in



*Gypsy Girl in the Santa Maria  
Quarter—Cadiz*





## LAUGHING CADIZ

the center of it. All around the patio, and opening on it, were two-room dwellings, more like caves, with no windows in the rear or on the sides. In each of these "caves" a family of Gypsies were camping, so to speak. In the doorway of one of them a stout old Gitana was peeling some potatoes for supper. Eufemia was her name. She greeted me in the joyous, motherly fashion of the Gypsy *dai* the world over, and made me promise to come and taste her potatoes as soon as they were cooked. Frasco introduced me to his wife, a slender *Cañí*, and very dark. She was pleased when she learned that I knew the Gypsies of her native city, Cordova. To celebrate the occasion she went out and got material for a Gypsy dish, *huevos flamenco*.

None of the dwellings had a stove. A single room at one end of the patio had been set aside as the common kitchen; and there, on a sort of long brick bench, the various dwellers in the building brought their charcoal braziers on which to cook. The eggs, dropped into a sauce of green peppers, tomatoes, olive oil, onions, and ham, were delicious. I had brought along a jar of excellent wine. The unglazed clay of the jar allowed a constant evaporation which kept the wine at a cool temperature that was very refreshing. Other Romanies were called in to try some *Oloroso* from the jar, and a mood of merriment was soon noticeable.

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Frasco began to snap his fingers and hum a bulería, winking at me as much as to say: watch the effect. In a moment others had taken up the song; hands began to beat in rhythm, and Gypsy feet to tap the floor. As though hypnotized by the music one of the Gitanillas arose and began to dance, while a circle formed about her shouting: "¡Olé la *čaboracita*! ¡Alsá! ¡Alsá!"

As it was cooler in the courtyard we went out into the open, and there the juerga began in earnest. The amphora circulated continuously, passing from hand to hand, and lip to lip, or making a trip to a nearby wineshop to be refilled. It no longer contained the exquisite Oloroso, but the gaiety and song, and the galvanic, impetuous quality of the dance made up for the lack of quality in the wine.

The sherry itself seemed animated with the spirit of the occasion, glad to be released, after years in its gloomy prison in a cask in some dark cellar. It fairly chuckled as it gurgled from the jar, and raced through the Romanies' veins, lighting their hearts with sudden flares of youth and merriment. Underneath it all flowed a somber current, as though their gaiety were compounded of an element of desperation; as though they were trying to make up for years of struggle with adversity by the pleasures of a single moment.

From somewhere Eufemia had fished out an

## LAUGHING CADIZ

old bonnet, which she perched on the side of her head. In Andalusia the Spanish women themselves seldom wear hats; and after a month or two in the southern province, when you see one it looks artificial and grotesque.

A balcony ran completely around the patio. It was covered with *Bu'né* who had come out to see the fun. The cries grew louder: "¡Venga! ¡Eso es! ¡Bravo! ¡Bravo!" Each Gypsy danced until exhausted, then joined the cheering ring, and another stepped into the center and tried to outdo his predecessor. As the pitch of passionate enthusiasm was working toward a tremendous climax, the crowd of Gentiles on the balcony began to protest at the noise. "¡Basta! ¡Basta! We want to sleep!" The dancing stopped; and names began to fly back and forth. It seemed as though there would soon be a riot.

It was most amusing to think that the aristocrats of Spain and Russia pay huge sums to see the Gypsies dance; and here were people protesting, when many a person would have envied them their opportunity. As a matter of fact, it was a case of the ants envying the grasshoppers their ability to enjoy themselves.

The danger of a scuffle, in which every man and woman would be armed, was averted by a suggestion from Eufemia: "Let's go out to the fields! Houses belong to the *Bu'né*; but the fields belong to God—and the Gypsies!" The

## NIGHTS AND DAYS ON THE GYPSY TRAIL

idea was a good one; so out we filed into the Paseo del Sur, past the bull ring, past the prison, past the slaughter-house, past the San Roque Barracks at the outer walls, and all the man-made buildings of *Bu'nó* civilization, to the beach overlooking the Atlantic.

Across the curving shore line the moon was dancing on the waters in phosphorescent scales, and shedding its weird unearthly glow on the white walls of Cadiz. It shone too on the azulejo dome of the Cathedral, with its glazed tiles gleaming like a great fantastic bubble.

The revel continued. The salt sea-breeze, the moonlight, and the vast expanse of sky and ocean seemed to intoxicate the Gypsies more than the Jerez. They were all like children, laughing, shouting, and gamboling on all fours in the grass and sand.

"Get Eufemia to dance!" Frasco whispered. "She used to be a marvel."

"Give us a farruca Gitana!" I called to her.

"You didn't keep your promise to eat some of my potatoes," she laughed. "I'm still angry." But after a little urging, she and an elderly Gypsy took their places opposite each other and began a strange danza that was both beautiful and grotesque. An explosion of mirth shook the crowd. The dance was intended as a caricature, an exaggeration of a baile flamenco. They wobbled their knees and hips, and stamped and

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struck emphatic attitudes. Yet they maintained a certain grace, a feverish intensity of passion, that was amazing in so elderly a couple.

The dances became completely unrestrained, bacchanalian, a seething effervescence. They would have been libidinous had they been anything save mere jollity and high spirits. Chaste as a rule in their marital relations, the Gypsies find expression for all their deepest passions in their songs and dances. If the shade of some Greek or Roman citizen of Cadiz had been hovering over the scene he would have paused, and exclaimed: "A saturnalia of the demi-gods!" and would have sworn that he had seen the sea-nymphs holding frolic with the satyrs.

That night I stayed with Frasco. It was cooler sleeping on a mattress spread in the doorway than in the stuffy Fonda. I soon was fast asleep in the midst of my new friends. And in spite of the fact that Frasco may have been a fugitive from justice, I had a sense of absolute security which I hardly felt when sleeping in a room with unknown *Gačé*.

In the morning I invited the Gitanos to have their "coffee with milk" in a neighboring café. The effects of the libations were still felt by some of the party: a lassitude, rather pleasant than otherwise, a sensitiveness of the nerves that made one keenly alive to the beauty of a melancholy



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solea' that was being sung in a house across the way.

"A la reja de la cárcel  
No me vengas a llorar. . . .

"At the grating of the prison  
Do not come and weep for me. . . ."

In the main the mood was a merry one, an ungoverned tendency to laugh at everything. With each glass of coffee, lumps of sugar were served wrapped in tissue paper. "Why, Cousin, a Gypsy doesn't stop to unwrap them!" said Frasco, throwing paper and all into the steaming beverage. His example was followed by everyone with naïve gaiety.

On our way toward the Plaza, Frasco stopped at the door of a smithy. "One of the blood," he remarked, nodding in the direction of a little man with powerful arms, who was hammering out a horse-shoe from a rough bar of iron. Everywhere the Romanies are workers in metals: blacksmiths, coppersmiths, tinkers. The smith's naturally dark complexion was black from the smoke of the forge. His face was wrinkled about the eyes from constant squinting at the red-hot iron, and the corners of his mouth were lined from continual smiling. He was singing to himself, the clink of his hammer marking time to the primitive folksong.

His greeting was very cordial as he stopped



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his work and asked us to take refreshments with him in the wineshop on the opposite corner. He had grown up in Jerez, and was proud of two things: the wines of his native city, and his former fame as cantador. His voice was a bit old and cracked, but he liked to talk of his triumphs in the old days. When I told him that I was going to Jerez he told me to be sure to look up certain friends of his who were singers, and to give them his warmest messages. There was one, Boca, who worked in the Pedro Domecq Bodega, that I must not fail to greet.

While we were talking, a policeman entered the place, and nodding to us dropped nonchalantly into a chair at our table and ordered a glass of wine. To my amazement he began to talk in *Caló*. "*Sinelas Caló?* Are you a Romani?" I asked. In reply the municipio started to tap on table with his saber, in time to the following estribillo:

"De los Gitanitos no.  
Que me cría entre ellos,  
Me tiró la inclinación.

"I am not a Gypsy, no.  
I was raised among them, though,  
And long to follow where they go."

It was true as he had sung. In his boyhood he had mingled with the Gypsy children of Jerez, the smith among others, and was an enthusiastic devotee of all things Gypsy, especially their

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songs. And although he was a policeman he never bothered the Gitanos; in fact, as Frasco hinted after his departure, he had helped them out of more than one tight pinch. He was one of the aficionados, of whom I met many in Andalusia. When the smith got up to pay the tabernero he found that our wine was paid for—by the policeman!

A few days later, Frasco and his wife accompanied me to the train. I was carrying my rucksack on one shoulder, and walking peacefully across the square in front of the station. I heard a queer, angry cry, but as I was engaged in conversation, I did not turn around. Suddenly I felt a blow that nearly knocked me off my feet. A large, jagged stone had struck my rucksack and dropped with a clatter to the pavement. We were in the crossfire of two boys fighting with stones. "Are you hurt?" my companion cried with great concern, unmindful of the danger to himself. The next stone was thrown more accurately, and caught one of the boys in the head, cutting a deep gash. With a shriek that sounded more like the cry of a wounded animal he fell, doubled in pain. My impulse was to go to his aid; but Frasco checked me with: "It serves him right! He might have killed you if it hadn't been for your bag. Don't bother with him: he's a *Bu'nó!*" Gypsies are utterly indifferent to what befalls a person of another race.

## Chapter IV

### *Gypsies, Wine, and Song*

#### JEREZ

**T**HE first thing I did, the day after I arrived in Jerez, was to go to the Pedro Domecq Bodega to look for Boca, the Gypsy singer of whom the smith in Cadiz had told me. The entrance to the Bodega looked so imposing, however, and my "Gypsy" clothes so shabby, that I felt I must at least play the tourist to the extent of arriving in a carriage, or I would not be admitted. It was noon of the hottest day I struck in Spain, and I had to walk back to the Plaza, nearly a mile in the vertical rays of the July sun, before I found a cab. When it pulled up at the entrance, the driver said that he was not allowed to enter; and so my little subterfuge was quite in vain.

However, a charming gentleman, of purely Italian parentage, who was English through birth in Gibraltar, and Spanish through continuous residence in Spain, met me and graciously showed me the entire establishment, which is one of the largest and finest wine cellars in the world. It is really a series of wine cellars. The dim light, the arching walls of massive ma-

## NIGHTS AND DAYS ON THE GYPSY TRAIL

sonry, the white walls, and shut-in atmosphere remind one of a church or monastery, except for the long rows of casks, piled high in pyramids.

In a corner of one of the bodegas were hogs-heads labeled "Pitt," "Wellington," and "María Luisa," containing wine that was over a century old. In another bodega stood a cask of cognac and of wine that had pleased their majesties, Alfonso XIII and Victoria Eugenia, and on which they had written their respective names. In a deep, low-vaulted crypt, that likewise had a monastic air, were stored the sparkling wines. As we passed through the Coñac Bodega, a tester was trying the contents of one of the casks. The Spanish Italian-Englishman handed me a tiny glass. "It is only thirty years old," he said, "but it is very good." It was, indeed. In my student days in Paris, after a week's enforced fasting, I had celebrated the arrival of my allowance with a glass of 1848 Fine Champagne brandy at Marguery's. Good as it had been, it had not had the full-bodied bouquet of this special brandy made from the more highly flavored Sherry.

I asked for Boca, but was told that he had left the Bodega. However, my time was not lost. I had missed the singer, but I was to discover the secret of song. In the sampling room, overlooking a pleasant park with palm trees, flowers, and luxuriant shrubbery, we sat in comfort-

able wicker chairs while an attendant brought us glasses of characteristic wines. First, a pale Amontillado, dry and light as sunshine, not at all suggesting the somber, tragic quality I had associated with it from reading Poe's tale. The next was a Pedro Liménez Venerable, the very perfection of wine, the embodiment of an Horatian ode; then Oloroso, some seventy years old, dark and mellow, with a flavor of nuts, half wine, half cognac. It was followed by a Muscatel, in the making of which sufficient grapes were used to produce a score of ordinary Muscatels. It was a sweet wine, caressing the palate, and giving one the sensation of absorbing the very soul of the grape. Some Napoleon was brought in. For a hundred and fifty years it had lain maturing in the cask, a contemporary of Voltaire and Washington. In the process of gradual evaporation it had become a pure essence, a perfume rather than a wine, so concentrated that it could not be drunk; but a drop of it in a cask of younger wine would lend a marvelous bouquet.

Finally a bottle of Sparkling Sherry, medio-seco, was opened, more delicious than any of the sparkling wines of France or Italy I have ever tried: Ruinart, Veuve Cliquot, or Lachrymæ Christi Spumanti. It was richer, smoother, more colorful, so to speak; it had more character, and at the same time had the lightness, the dash, and the fire of a Gypsy seguidilla.



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A song, framed on the wall of the room, likened the "Champagne Pedro Domecq" to the dark eyes of the Jerezanas: "two things one carries away in his soul on leaving Jerez." It had always puzzled me that a city as small as Jerez had furnished more coplas and cantadores than even Seville itself. But now I knew why since Roman and Moorish days this region has been famous for its singers. As I left the gates I felt in a lyric mood myself.

My next step to find Boca was to look for him in a *café cantante* of the Calle Doctrina, where, I was told, a number of Gypsy singers gather in the evening. I found the place, a *café* with a lofty wooden ceiling and huge rafters. At one end was a stage and a piano. On the walls were the usual flaming posters of ferocious bulls, picadors with lowered lances, and matadors advancing with gleaming sword. Again I failed to find Boca; but time did not drag.

Over in a corner some Gypsies were entertaining a party of *señoritas* by singing coplas. In the middle of the floor a Gitano was amusing himself by dancing. He pulled his coat tight about his hips, did a number of whimsical, graceful steps, and ended by jerking off his cap and shaking free a single lock of hair that fell to his shoulders. It was the *moño* of a bull-fighter. The Gypsy was a *torero*.



## GYPSIES, WINE, AND SONG

Noticing that I was watching him he came over to the table where I was sitting, and said with a smile, "You have a Gypsy face." As I acknowledged having Romani blood, and remarked that he too had the features of a *Caló*, he added in the same good-natured tone: "Yes, there isn't a more Gypsy face in jail." I invited him to have a glass of wine, but he refused, saying that as a bull-fighter he had to keep in training, but admitting that he found it rather hard, and that only the night before he had been *motó*, that he had had a drop too much.

When the Gypsies had finished singing, the torero beckoned to them to come over and sit down. From them I learned the whereabouts of Boca, who since leaving the Bodega had become a shoemaker. When I told them I wanted to see him because I was fond of the Gypsy songs, they sang a number of them for me. Then they suggested that the bull-fighter sing in turn; but he shook his head sadly and replied: "Cuando no tengo *parné*, no tengo gracia para cantar. When I have no money, I have no spirit for singing." How mercenary for an artist, I thought, until I recalled Villon lamenting his poverty:

"En povreté me guermentant. . . ."

and Oscar Wilde pleading to Frank Harris a lack of funds as an excuse for not composing verse: "Oh, Frank, it's impossible, impossible

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for me to work under these disgraceful conditions."

A number of well-dressed Spaniards, more or less drunk, were grouped around the piano. One of them started to play a mediocre air from a popular zarzuela, in spite of the fact that a Gypsy cantador was singing an ancient martinete. His voice purred in tremulous vibrato, coming as though from the depths of his being. It was music that had stood the test of untold ages, and was beautiful in a strange way, and sung with extraordinary art. Suddenly the player at the piano stopped and shouted, "Stop that noise!" referring to the song rather than to his own clumsy efforts. The Romanies smiled, with their customary deference to señoritos; but I caught a gleam of hate in their black eyes.

A little later two of the party strolled over and joined in the conversation, unbidden. As I was a foreigner, I aroused their curiosity, and they began to question me. The Spaniards are the politest nation of the Occident, and their politeness is something more than the mere "oil of social intercourse." It consists not only of formulas for smoothing human relationships, but also of real consideration and thoughtfulness for others. Moreover, it is not confined to any special class. In fact the most courteous are apt to be workmen or peasants. At times,

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however, among individuals of the so-called upper classes one meets a domineering arrogance that is intolerable, and reminds one of the all too frequent Anglo-Saxon, American attitude toward foreigners. The cabelleros addressed me successively in French, Italian, Arabic, and English; and as their questions became impertinent, instead of answering them I paid the bill and withdrew, followed by the Gitanos.

The Spaniards came as far as the door, where one of them brusquely demanded that I throw up my hands. I knew that I was not being held up, but I had no intention of letting myself be browbeaten, so I refused. Fortunately, when they made vague threats, the torero and the other Gypsies stepped forward with looks that were not to be misunderstood, and they retreated.

I was puzzled until one of my companions remarked that he had heard that the arrogant fellow was a prosecuting attorney or a judge of some sort. He had doubtless suspected me of being a criminal, and had wanted to find out if I was carrying concealed weapons. I had a knife that was over the legal length, and I might have found myself in trouble.

The following afternoon I found Boca. He was sitting on his low bench, humming a seguidilla as he tapped away on the sole of a shoe. He was most cordial when I gave the black-

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smith's message and told him why I had come. The shoe was dropped, and soon we were sitting under the vine arbor of an adjoining tavern sipping some pale Amontillado. He was a man of some fifty years, with a constant smile on his lips, and a pensive, melancholy look in his dark eyes.

He was not in joyous mood, as the night before he had been singing for some señoritos, and the wine had been too good to resist, and too plentiful. To make matters worse, he had lost the key to his rooms and had been forced to break in the heavy oak door with an axe, while his wife and children stood beside him crying. When I asked him to sing, he replied with a gesture of regret, "*Para guiyabar hay que estar priba'o*," meaning that singers, like pumps, sometimes need considerable priming. It was not a hint, however, as he refused to let me treat him to another Amontillado.

He told me of the gay times he had had while working at the Bodega. Frequently wealthy young men would come and buy a cask of the most expensive wine and requisition his services as a singer, taking him with them to a cortijo, or ranch house in the hills, where they would spend a day or two "*en juerga*," drinking, dancing and singing in the crude hall or underneath the stars. Though he was well paid after these sprees, they must have had their disadvantages,



*Patio of Gypsy Singer's  
House in Jerez*





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for now he was better content to live by his cobbling.

At first it seemed odd to think of a Gypsy making shoes; but then I reflected on the unusual skill of Romanies everywhere with hammer and knife. Give them these tools and they can make anything from clothes-pins to jewelry.

As the lengthening rays of the sun projected the shadows of the leafy vines and hanging clusters of grapes on the white wall of the taberna, he told me of his colleagues, the illiterate Gypsy singers who have cultivated the art of improvising in a simple heartfelt way, which taught Spain's greatest lyric poet, Gustavo Bécquer, how to make great poetry. Similarly, one of the most unusual books of recent verse, Manuel Machado's *Cante Hondo*, is composed in the popular style of Andalusia.

Boca told me of La Pompei, and Manolito Torres, his comrades, and of Silverio, a singer of another generation, the king of cantadores, who had popularized among the *Gacé* the art of cante Gitano, the art he had learned in his boyhood. Running away from the tailor to whom he was apprenticed, Silverio had passed hour after hour listening to the Gypsies as they worked and sang at their forges.

Silverio had gone off to South America while still a young man, and there, as a tailor in Buenos Ayres, a picador in the bull rings of

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Uruguay in peace times and an officer in the army in war times, he had continued to practice his art of *cante Gitano*.

When he returned to Spain he was as yet unknown, though one of the greatest singers of his day. Soon after landing he gathered together in a *juerga* at Jerez the best *cantadores*, and ordered some rare wine and produced a box of the finest Havana cigars. When each singer had sung his best for this wealthy *Americano*, as they supposed him to be, Silverio asked the guitar player to strike up a Gypsy *seguirya*, and throwing back his head in the proper manner he sang, more beautifully than any of them, the very song that one of the *cantadores* present had improvised years before, and had half-forgotten. Such was their surprise and joy that the impulsive *Gitanos* threw their arms about him and wept.

Though Boca still refused to sing, he told me a number of characteristic songs to copy. One of them expressed most aptly the pathos of his position when dependent on the good will of the *señoritos* for the support of his wife and children. It also expresses the pathos of the whole race; and reminds one of the famous lines of Dante, who, after wandering in exile dependent on the great *signori*, tells how salty is the taste of others' bread, and how weary the going up and down of others' stairs.

## GYPSIES, WINE, AND SONG

“¡ Desgraciado de aquel que come  
Y bebe por manita ajena!  
¡ Siempre mirando la cara,  
Y lo pone malo bueno!

“Unhappy man who has to eat  
From strangers' hands! Unhappy plight!  
He has to watch their every look,  
He has to say that wrong is right!”

As I did not like the fonda where I was staying, I asked him to tell me the name of another. He replied that he would ask me to stay with him, but his wife was still upset about the broken door, and it might not be very pleasant. He insisted, however, on showing me to a hotel. As we walked along he asked me about myself, and I could see that the fact that I was traveling about with no apparent trade led him to the same conclusion as that of the prosecuting attorney in the *café cantante*.

I also noticed that he was taking me through the back streets, as though afraid of being seen with me. Of a sudden he stopped, and laying his hand on my shoulder he said: “The Chief of Police and many of the principal persons here in Jerez know me. I have a family, and a certain reputation to sustain. Tell me what you have done, so that I can protect myself and protect you. Tell me as you would your own father.” *Maraste un Bu'no en čingaripé? Čoraste parné?* Did you kill a Gentile in a fight? Did

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you steal some money?" Knowing that if I declared myself innocent he would think I was lying, I confessed to an imaginary crime. "Pobre *čaboró!* Poor boy!" was all he said, as he looked at me tenderly with his melancholy eyes. I felt quite guilty. When he had seen me safely to the new fonda, he made me promise that I would come to see him before going away.

As I was leaving early the next morning, I got up at five o'clock and walked three miles out of my way to keep my word. He rose from his bench to greet me, and as host insisted on my taking a stirrup cup with him. When I said good-bye, he took my hands in his as though I were indeed his own son, and kissed me on the cheek. Gypsies, being unsuppressed, often do this; while Anglo-Saxons are afraid to show their kindness—and thus it is wasted. Boca was smiling, and his sad eyes seemed to say: "You are going out among strangers, perhaps even to prison; but the thoughts and affection of one of your own race will be with you wherever you go."



## Chapter V

### *Gypsy Andalusia*

SEVILLE, TRIANA, CORIA

THE train was approaching Seville. Everyone in the compartment was becoming restless. Faces beamed with joyous anticipation. All morning we had been looking out on bare, brown plains, burned implacably by the sun, and rolling to a far-away horizon that was half obliterated by the dust-filled atmosphere; and now we were beginning to see crisp visions of green orange groves and graceful palm trees. For a moment Spanish politeness was forgotten in an eagerness to see; and the car windows were jammed with heads. As the train sped through the fertile plain, the wind that was rushing past our faces was refreshing and laden with sweet scents. It had wandered languorously through many gardens, caressing fruits and flowers.

“¡Allí está!” several excited voices cried in unison as we caught a glimpse of the Giralda rising above the treetops and the flat roofs of Seville. A little later we could see the huge mass of the cathedral standing clear of the city. The Giralda, which is perhaps the most beautiful tower in the world, is nearly all that is left of the



Moorish mosque that once occupied that same site.

Is it not fitting that a Moorish minaret should be the landmark of the merry Andalusian capital? To-day the harmonious shaft from which the great bells boom melodiously, and from which the muezzin once called the faithful to prayer, now calls afar to the traveler, inviting him to taste the pagan, Oriental joys of gay Seville. It seems to sing of slender glasses of Manzanilla, svelte Gitanas with arms uplifted in a sprightly sevillana, or the soaring notes of a semi-Moorish seguidilla.

What city is more given to pleasure, and holds more smiling memories for the roamer? Where will you find another metropolis in which the principal street, the Calle de las Sierpes, is a long reception hall, a free club-room, barred to all vehicles, and devoted to the needs of the idle stroller?

After taking a room in the Calle Tetuán, I went across the river to Triana to look for Frasco's sister, Mariana, in the district known as the Cava Vieja. I found the house. An old man sitting in the doorway and some children playing in the passage-way were obviously Gitanos, but they did not understand me when I questioned them in Gypsy. When I asked them in Spanish they called to Mariana, who appeared from an inner room. As Frasco had told me, she



was completely blind; but to my surprise, her large, dark eyes were open wide, and so luminous that one would never have suspected her infirmity except from the fact that she had to be led to a chair. She seemed to be staring into space, while all the time she smiled with ineffable sweetness. One would have said that she was continuously seeing some vision of unearthly beauty.

There is something touching about the gratitude of Gypsies on receiving news of relatives. Blood ties are strong with them, separation painful; and being illiterate, communication by letter is difficult. Often members of families are scattered over the globe without even knowing one another's whereabouts. Led by one of her little children, Mariana took me around La Cava to tell again and again to various relations the same story of Frasco's health and wanderings and how he was getting along.

While I was chatting with one of them on a doorstep, a powerfully built Gitano with exceptionally swarthy features spoke to me in "deep" Gypsy, *Caló* rancio, inviting me to come across the street and have a chat. "*Čanela' fetel o Caló*. You speak good Gypsy," he said. "*Los de ocata sinelan como Bu'né. Nanai Čanelan más que el Caló de čoripé.*" The ones here are like Gentiles. They only know thieves' Gypsy," he added with contempt. He himself was from Badajoz, but had wandered all through Estremadura, Portu-

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gal, and Andalusia horse trading, selling smuggled goods, and "*xoxabando los Bu'né*" cheating the Gentiles in any way he could.

That evening I returned to La Cava, as I was curious to see Mariana's husband because of an incident which her brother had related in Cadiz. She had married a *Bu'nó*. Owing to the traditional aversion of the Romanies to mixed marriages, this was bad enough; but not uncommon in Triana, where intermingling is more frequent than in any other part of the world. What made this marriage a veritable crime in Frasco's eyes was the fact that the bridegroom was the son of a *xundanaro*, a police officer. More than that, the father belonged to the Guardia Civil, the Spanish constabulary, who journey about patrolling the remotest parts of the Peninsula, and are the sworn enemies of the Gypsy. They always go in pairs, and their olive-drab uniforms, patent-leather cocked hats, yellow belts, and every-ready carbines are a familiar sight to every traveler.

Frasco's protests had been in vain. Had not the son of the *xundanaro* been raised in Triana among the *Calé*? And did he not speak Gypsy better than Frasco himself? The brother was obliged to smother his resentment. The day of the wedding, when the ceremony was over and the guests were merry, he sat drinking in sullen silence. When the last cup of wine had loosened

the bolts of his anger, he sprang to his feet with open knife and stabbed at the groom. The intervening table and the unsteadiness of his aim averted a tragedy.

For once it was fortunate that Mariana was blind. While frozen horror stared from every face, the bride still smiled, gazing serenely into space with her large, luminous eyes.

The trouble was mended by the chivalrous promise of the groom never to mention it. "It's only one of the guests who has had too much, and has fallen across the table," the bride was told. The festivities continued.

Having found little of the typically Gypsy in Triana, I decided to make an excursion to Coria, where the Gitanos were said to be unspoiled by mingling with the natives. It was early morning when I took the little boat in Seville. Across the Guadalquivir, the Gypsy quarter opposite, with its flat roofs and white houses gleaming in the slanting sunlight, looked for all the world like an African village.

The vaporcito swung down the river in the track of the "golden galleons," winding back and forth. For the most part, the banks are deserted. Soon after leaving the city, the eye sweeps a grassy plain. In the foreground a group of herdsmen with long tridents guarding straggling herds of wild fighting bulls. Further on we rounded a bluff, crowned by a battlemented wall.

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Lines of white houses tumble down the slope to the river, in the picturesque setting of a double row of tall, straight cypress trees.

We reached Coria. The town has been famous since Roman times for its pottery. It has lived unchanged for ages. As in the immutable Orient, stagnation is complete. A living corpse in a shroud of dull gray dust.

After looking about for a while I asked where I might find the Gypsies, and was directed to a series of cave-dwellings at the further end of the narrow town. Noon. The dull heat and dust were scarce endurable. Before my eyes lay a picture of poverty, monotony, and desolation. Under the gray wall of the bluff was a long line of gray houses. Between the bluff and the river a wide band of gray soil. Not a blade of grass. A grove of trees offered a slight change; but the withered leaves drooped wearily, a dusty gray-green. A flock of sheep, the color of the soil, were resting in the meager shade.

Walking in front of me was a girl in a red waist. A gust of wind arose, and a cloud of dust blotted out the scene. The wind and dust subsided, and slowly the tops of the trees appeared, then the red waist, still in a gray haze.

Reaching the last cave in the row, I rapped on the wooden door; and on hearing some one stir I asked if any Gypsies lived there. A dull voice from the cavern answered in a tone that told me



I was interrupting someone's siesta. "What do you want?"

"An American *Caloró* who has come to see his brothers here," I replied in *Caló*. The door was cautiously opened a few inches, revealing a tall Gitano with sharp features and eyes in which defiance was struggling with curiosity. Satisfying himself that I was not of the *xundanare*, he invited me to come in. Like most Gypsy caves in Spain the dwelling consisted of two small rooms, cut one behind the other in the solid rock. The inner one was in darkness, and so small that it was nearly filled by a bed. The outer one was whitewashed; and was lighted by the door. It was bare except for a string of garlic hanging from the ceiling, a chair, and a photograph veiled in crêpe. Inviting me to take the only seat, he squatted on the floor. He told me his name was José; and as we talked his expression changed from one of puzzled suspicion to the amiability of a friendly eagle.

From time to time a faint moan, a plaintive exclamation of "¡Ay! ¡Madre!" came from the blackness of the inner chamber. It was his wife, who was ill. She had never risen from her bed since the birth of their two-year-old baby. She called to know who it was; and on being told, she asked that we come to her bedside. In the dim light I could scarce see anything save the feverish glow of her eyes. She was the more in-



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telligent of the two, and entered into conversation rather brightly, glad of the opportunity to break the dead monotony of eternal darkness, the same prostrate condition, and the endless pain.

They talked of the Gypsy tongue, which they spoke imperfectly, and of Gypsy customs mentioned by Borrow in *The Zincali*. "Do you Gypsies in America still keep the custom of the *dicló*?" she asked. The *dicló* is the handkerchief with which the bride's virginity is ascertained on the eve of her wedding, and which is triumphantly paraded through the streets during the marriage procession. "Some of the families here keep it up," she added. "But, alas, not many."

At that moment the girl in the red waist appeared. She was their daughter. She was eight or nine years old, and was carrying the baby. It was on her that the responsibility of the household had fallen. The older daughter had been a dancer, and had gone to Gibraltar to dazzle the "Ingreses" with her art, and to bring back English gold which the family greatly needed.

She had not returned. There had been no letters, no explanation of her silence, until one day a Gypsy returning from the "Rock" on a smuggling expedition had brought her photograph. The parents were so overjoyed on seeing it that the messenger could not bear to tell them that she was dead. He had left it for a comrade to inform them the following day.

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"If only I could have seen her and touched her!" the mother exclaimed. But no, they were powerless to do any of the little acts that express and relieve one's grief, save to veil in black the picture, which ever since had stared in silence from the wall. This photograph in its cheap gilt frame was their one treasure.

They were desperately poor; but bore their poverty with the stoic fatalism of all Oriental races. Working in the fields José could make from twenty-five to thirty cents a day; but there were days, especially in winter, when there was no work.

I had a kodak with me, and asked to take their picture. "How much?" José demanded. I thought he meant to ask how much I would give for the privilege; but I was mistaken. When they learned that I was going to take their picture for nothing they were highly delighted; and when I sent them copies of it from America, the letter of thanks which they contrived to send was most touching. I was rather annoyed when a Gentile girl from a neighboring cave stepped into the picture. But her stiff pose and self-conscious look only served as a foil to the naturalness and glittering eyes of the Gitanilla.

Before I went, they insisted on my having something to eat with them. As with not a few field workers in Andalusia, Gypsies and Gentiles alike, they had but one dish, the characteristic

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gazpacho, a sort of salad and vegetable soup in one, which is eaten cold. "Those few bits of tomato and cucumber look rather lonely swimming around in all that water," remarked José with a smile. "But it is all we have."

When I was about to take leave, I went into the inner cave to say good-bye to the mother. There she had lain prostrate for two long years in that dark sepulcher, worse than entombed alive; for instead of the deep sleep of death, the darkness of her days and nights were shot with flashes of pain, while all about her lay the gray waste of poverty, monotony, and desolation.

How could I help them? I felt a sense of powerlessness, grim as the black rock wall; but as I took her hand I pressed a coin into the palm. "Merely a token of friendship." I said, hardly knowing whether or not the gift would hurt their pride. The doubt was soon settled. I knew there was joy in her heart, for though she was so moved that she could not reply, her feverish eyes glowed brightly, and her hand trembled in mine.

In order not to miss the steamer back to Seville it was necessary to hurry. In the shadow of the cliff I turned to look back at my friends. A puff of wind arose and sent the gray dust eddying upward. Gypsies and cave quickly faded in the gray haze.

Having found little of the traditional gaiety and color among the Gypsies of Triana, and still

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less among those of Coria, I went to seek it in the Macarena Quarter of Seville, where a number of Gitanos live. I remembered an evening in the Alameda de Ercoles eight years before, watching the little girls underneath the blue glare of the arc-lights going through the movements of the Sevillana with elasticity and grace, accompanied by the wavering notes of high childish voices and the clapping of tiny hands. At that time dancing was more popular than tag or hide and seek.

Now, for over a quarter of a mile, the Alameda was jammed with people watching "Made in America" movies: the familiar physiognomy of Charlie Chaplin, known and loved the world over, wild pursuits through the forests of Hoboken, fierce bandits leaping from Erie freight trains, the fat Los Angeles ice-man jollyng the cook, in short, loads of local color from home—and not even a mantilla or a Manila shawl to show that this was Seville and the Macarena Quarter.

However, I soon saw that the change was more apparent than real. Love for the "things of Andalusia" was still alive. I sat down in front of a little café and observed nearly a score of people standing in a semi-circle listening to some old folk-songs on a phonograph. To a Western ear, the music continuing for bar after bar with little change in pitch would have seemed monotonous, but the crowd never tired. A man with a sparse black beard and typical Moorish

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features stood there for half an hour shaking his head in time to the music, oblivious of an enormous pack he was carrying on his shoulders. Later when some ordinary continental air was played, a man sitting next to me remarked: "I don't like it; it goes up and down too much."

Further on, in the Barqueta was a café cantante with some Gypsies performing on the stage in a bored, listless manner. A Gypsy in a theater, dancing for the *Bu'né*, is a very different creature from one in a juerga of Gitanos, straining every nerve to win the approval of his fellows.

I did not despair, however, for I knew that I should find what I was seeking, if I persisted. The longer I stayed in Seville, the more I learned the truth of the statement of the Estremaduran Gypsy that the Gitanos of Seville and Triana are like the Gentiles. But I was also soon to discover the truth of the oft-repeated saying that the Andalusians are medio-agitanados, half-Gypsified. Indeed I was soon to find Sevilleans more Flamenco, more Gypsy than the Gitanos themselves.

One day I had been idling in the Alcázar, that "rêve de pierre," that enchanted palace, where the dazzling dreams of Oriental artists, dead for centuries, were crystallized for all time in symphonies of color. There were no other visitors—none save the ghosts of Moorish kings, philosophers, and dancing girls, the somber shade of



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Peter the Cruel, and all the beautiful dead whom he had loved and slain. In the rare and fragrant garden, bright-hued butterflies, ethereal as the souls of the vanished, poised with palpitating wings on banks of roses. Startled lizards with beady eyes darted from the greenery and disappeared. A choir of birds was making merry in this retreat of kings.

On coming out I happened into a curio shop, where I made the acquaintance of a young photographer, whom I asked about the Dancing Academy of the famous Otero. By chance he knew him personally and with the every-ready Spanish courtesy he offered to take me there that evening.

We entered a private house with a long narrow patio. Against one wall was a long wooden bench for the dancers. From the opposite wall hung green sprays of creeping vines. At the farther end of the courtyard, in the doorway of a room covered with bull-fight posters, were two musicians, one of them the well-known guitar player and composer, Señor Don Juan Gandulla, better known as "Beans."

Otero is the greatest teacher of Spanish dancing in the world, as great in his own style as the divine Isadora Duncan is in hers. The night was warm, and the Maestro was in his shirt sleeves and collarless, but looking none the less distinguished. There is something in his power-

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ful features and proud bearing such as one sees in a few great artists so completely mastered by their art that they have complete possession of it, and to whom no title save that of Master seems fitting.

It has been stated that the chief role of the Gypsies in Spanish dancing has been to preserve the old dances. This is true only in a measure; but it is certain that a Gentile, Otero, has given permanent form and beauty to many of the *bailes flamencos*, Gypsy dances, which would disappear in time where it not for his efforts.

"¡Venga la *Cañi*! Come on Gypsy!" cried Otero with a smile, beckoning to a tiny tot of four or five years, who took her place beside him in the line of dancers who were rehearsing what they had learned that week. The child danced half a score of difficult dances with the utmost ease and vivacity, and rattled her castanets without ever losing a beat in the most complicated maze of rhythms. It was marvelous to see the joy of the little pink and white creature as she followed every movement of the middle-aged Master, who beamed with delight at her every step.

When the lesson was over I talked with Otero about the beautiful folk-arts of Andalusia. He told me that dancing had always been his dominant passion. When working as an apprentice in his youth, there had been a famous street dancer, María "Cazuela," "The Pot." When-

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ever he saw her he followed her, forgetting the errand on which his master had sent him, and taking without complaint the cuffs he received on his return to the shop. María was a pure-blooded Gypsy, and lived in the Cava Vieja of Triana. She was very ugly, and had lost one eye through a kick from her lover while courting at her window. In compensation the gallant was forced to marry her. She was quite without a sense of shame and her language was that of the wineshop. She was quick with her wit and her tongue; and when she passed her tambourine, and collected but few coppers and no silver coins, her sharp comments on the crowd provoked roars of laughter. It was she whom Otero first saw dance the Vito, a parody on bull-fighting, which he later developed and made famous.

After having seen a wide variety of Andalusian dances, I wished to hear the best singers of Andalusian songs, and asked the Master where I might hear them. "The best singer of to-day," he replied, "is the Gypsy, La Niña de los Peines, The Girl with the High Combs." She had been scheduled to sing in a theater in Barcelona when I was there; but for some reason she had not appeared. It had been a great disappointment. Cantadores de flamenco are more temperamental than even Grand Opera singers. "When I was asked," continued Otero, "to direct a typical Andalusian entertainment for their Majesties the

King and Queen, I sent for her.” She was singing in the neighboring city of Cordova on the stage, and knowing that there would be many “deep” Gypsies in her audience she had preferred them to royal listeners. “The best cantador in Seville today,” he added, “is José El Colora’o, from the Macarena.” After consulting with the musicians he told me that I should probably find him any time after midnight, at the Villa Rosa, a venta some miles out in the country. “It may not do you any good to go out there;” he remarked, “for although he is a professional singer, he only sings when he is in the mood.”

On the way home I invited the photographer to stop in a taberna and have some Jerez and a bite to eat. Discussing the flamenco dances we had seen that night, I happened to mention that I knew many Gypsies and spoke their language. Beaming with pleasure, he answered in *Caló*. I had stumbled on one of the aficionados, who had learned to speak it from the Gitanos of Granada, and who delighted in everything Gypsy. As a matter of fact he spoke it better than anyone with whom I talked in Seville, except the Estremaduran Gypsy and Mariana’s brother-in-law, the son of the Guardia Civil. My superior ability to tell what was true *Caló*, and what was thieves’ slang, owing to my knowledge of the other Gypsy dialects, amazed him; and he called to the tavern-keeper, “Listen! Here is a foreigner who speaks

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Gypsy divinely! He speaks it like the angels!" It was news to me that Romani was a celestial tongue; though I recalled that once when I was visiting the Carthusian Monastery near Granada with my Gitano friend, Miguel, the latter had pointed out some cherubs in a picture, and because they were playing musical instruments he had exclaimed, "Look! They must be Gypsies!"

It is interesting to note that in no country is the language so widespread among the Gentiles as in Spain. Perhaps a third of the words published in a recent dictionary of Spanish slang were of Romani origin. In fact the very word *Caló* itself is used synonymously for slang. This is due in part to the very severe laws passed in bygone centuries forcing the Gypsies to abandon their wandering life and settle in cities. Here they have been forced to come in contact more or less with the Castellanos. The classes with which they have associated most, and which have thus been able to pick up their language, have been the thieves, whom they met in the jails, the aristocrats, for whom they dance and sing, the monks of Jerez, with whom they traded horses, the bull-fighters, at whose sides they fight in the corridas, and the Andalusian folk-artists, with whom they sing and dance in the cafés.

Knowing that my friend would be interested in some of the latter I proposed that we hire a carriage and drive to Villa Rosa. "Good!" he



assented. We hailed a passing cab. The driver shook his head. It was too late, and too far. "There's a cabby," volunteered the tavern-keeper, "for whom there are just two things in life: Manzanilla and *Caló*. He'd take you to Villa Rosa for nothing just to hear you speak it. His name is Joaquín; and he drives a white horse. You'll probably find him in the Calle San Pablo." It seemed quite fitting that we should go to the venta in the carriage of an aficionado. Walking to the street to which we had been directed, we caught sight of a white horse standing in front of a wineshop; and there at the bar was Joaquín, sipping his favorite drink. Happily he was still sober, and ready to drive us to China if we but said the word.

Villa Rosa is an all-night country venta, with a flat roof overlooking the corral where the fighting bulls are kept before corridas. It has an open-air stage, and gardens with closed pavilions. We took a table where we could see the dancing, and told the waiter that if José El Colora'o were there, we should like to have him take a drink with us. A little later he appeared. He was rather slender, and carried an English cane. At first we turned the conversation on the subject of *Caló*, which he spoke fairly fluently; and from that to the Gypsies, of whom he had known a great many. Aware that he would have an appreciative audience he gladly consented to

find another cantador and a tocador, a guitar player, and to give us an exhibition of his art.

He returned with them shortly, and we retired to one of the pavilions. The traditional Manzanilla was ordered, and the fiesta began. The tocador struck a few preliminary chords on his guitar; and with one arm akimbo and the other tapping the floor with his cane, José threw back his head and commenced a Malagueña. As the saying goes: "The Malagueña is wept, not sung." It was a prolonged lament, a melancholy, poignant ululation that came welling up as though from the very vitals of the singer. It ended in a series of runs which rose in his throat like sobs, and died away in a long slow note which changed from a wail to a sigh. . . . There was much of the Moorish in it, and something of the Hindu, preserved no doubt by the Gypsies through centuries of wandering. It is a style of singing untaught in the schools, but as difficult as that of Grand Opera, and only attained by years of practice. That particular style of Malagueña he had learned from Juan Breva, a famous cantador of another generation.

The singers alternated, singing songs of every type, Gypsy and Andalusian. Some they had improvised themselves on various occasions. A certain famous set of coplas had been improvised in a wager between two rival cantadores: one from Cadiz, and the other from Seville, who were

to improvise as they danced. The origin of most of the coplas, however, is unknown, and many are extremely ancient. All of them have been handed down by word of mouth, from singer to singer.

"What is the most beautiful copla you know?" I asked José.

"It depends on the mood you are in," he replied. "Let me think."

"Here is one," eagerly volunteered the tocador, whose name, as he told me, was El Niño Mena, the son of Salvador. He began to recite it, but so rapidly and excitedly that I was obliged to have him repeat the separate lines again and again. Each time he repeated them he was as much excited as the first. It was impossible for him to tell the lines without being stirred. Did they recall some experience in his own life, I wondered? They suggest a tale that would have fascinated Poe.

"Su mecho hice pedazos,  
En el cementerio entré,  
Y su mecho hice pedazos.  
De la caja la saqué,  
Sólo para dar un abrazo—  
¡Y a verla me desmayé!

"I found her lying in the tomb, and tore  
The shroud away. I tore the shroud away,  
And took her from the coffin where she lay  
To hold her close within my arms once more:  
—But when I saw her face, I swooned away!"

Already the light of dawn was filtering through the greenery of the garden. We offered to take the musicians back to Seville; and the five of us squeezed into the little cab. "Please return by the Parque María Luisa and the Palace Garden," my companion asked the cabby.

The park was a veritable forest of trees and shrubs of every description; orange trees, camellias, and rosebushes, while northern birch trees mingled their branches with the tropical palms. Moist with dew, the ground gave out a woodsy odor that blended with the perfume of the roses. There were nightingales in the branches; but perhaps it was not the season of love-making, for we did not hear their song. But instead we had the no less natural singing of José, that soared above the treetops and died away in the still morning air. "It is one of the coplas I like best," he remarked. "I learned it from a Gypsy in Utrera." At first the words seemed in no way remarkable; but as I thought them over, worlds of meaning and emotion came to me. It is as follows:

"No tengo padre ni madre. . . .

¡Que desgraciado soy yo!

Soy como el árbol sólo

Que echa frutas y no echa flor.

"I lost my father; then my mother. . . .

Oh, that I had died that very hour!

I'm like the lonely tree that only

Beareth fruit, and beareth not a flower."

First of all it expresses one of the deepest sentiments of the Romani—his love for his parents. There is no creature more lonely and pathetic than a Gypsy orphan. But the feeling contained in the copla is even more universal: it voices the tragedy of all those who have never been young, whose lives have consisted of a declining, fruitful autumn, but have never known the spring. I met a man once who had gone to work in the mills when still a child. He was a successful business man of forty; but I shall never forget the sadness in his voice when he said, "I have always been old. . . ."

It voices, too, the pathos of an entire country, the most industrious and wealthiest to-day—the United States. A good many years ago Oscar Wilde spoke of the "youthfulness of the American race" as one of our oldest traditions. As a matter of fact we have always been old. Separated from the fatherland, an orphaned race, the people who came to this country found a land where everything had to be done from the beginning. With heroic determination they pitched in and worked from the start. And now it is difficult for them to do anything else. It is hard to learn to play, when one is prematurely old. The people of "Ancient Andalusia," on the other hand, like the Gypsies, have learned to do little else. They are blessed with eternal youth and song.



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Above the long avenue of hushed trees, a single star was shining against the pale sky, still tinged with green and rose. As the song faded, the words of a Sevillean poet, Manuel Machado, echoed in my brain:

"Vino, sentimiento, guitarra y poesía  
Hacen los cantares de la patria mía.  
Cantares. . . .  
Quien dice cantares dice Andalucía."

## Chapter VI

### *Picaresque Cordova*

**I**N Seville I had found the most Gypsy of Andalusians. In Cordova I was to find the most Gypsy of Gypsies in all Andalusia.

Immediately on arriving I went, like every traveler, to see the great Mosque, that forest of columns, endlessly diversified: columns of jasper, of marble, of porphyry, each like its neighbor, yet cunningly varied in shading of color, and in ornamentation. The hundreds of smooth shafts, and the curving arches gave the appearance of a grove of Royal Palms with branches interlacing overhead. Beautiful though it was, it lacked the mighty majesty of the cathedral of Seville, the lofty vaults of which, lost in the dim light above, give one a deeper feeling of awe than even the cathedrals of France and England. That of Seville is the largest Gothic structure in the world; and on entering it for the first time, one feels impelled to drop to his knees, breathless with wonder. Its builders had said: "Let us erect so mighty a temple that it will have no equal in the world, and such that future generations will think us mad." Their dream was realized.

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The intrusion of a mediocre church in the center of the old Mosque has done much to spoil the effect of wide vistas. Likewise, with the absence of the Moors, the soul of the place seems gone. As I left the Mezquita I tried to repeople it in my imagination as it had been under the Kaliph, Al-Hâkim, when Cordova was the richest and most cultured city of the Middle Ages.

In a photograph shop near the Mosque I met a relative of the photographer, Garzón of Granada, a noted aficionado. He had been a good musician, and at one time the Gypsy entertainments for tourists had been given in his establishment near the Alhambra. The relative was also on friendly terms with the Granada Gypsies; but when I asked him in regard to those of Cordova, he replied that he was not acquainted with them, but had heard that they were a bad lot. "You had better stay away from them," he added. "Especially as it is getting dark."

However, I insisted, and he told me the general direction of the quarter where they lived. I was glad of the indication, for, although I had been there once before, the narrow, winding streets are a labyrinth which must puzzle even the inhabitants. Soon I was obliged to stop in a wineshop to inquire my way.

"Do Gypsies ever come here?" I asked.

"Not if I know it!" he replied with energy. It was the picturesque district of the Potro, no-

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torious for five centuries for its picaresque characters, one of whom was in the band that tossed unlucky Sancho Panza in the blanket, in the adventure at the Inn.

Where the tortuous alley I was following widened into a tiny plazoleta, I noticed an old man and two girls who appeared to be Gitanos. The old man was deaf; and I was forced to shout in asking him if he was a Gypsy. He seemed suspicious, and answered evasively. I turned to the girls. "Yes, we are Gitanos," the taller of the two replied. "What do you want?" I told them that I was also a Romani, and that I wanted to see and talk with my people. "Why?" she questioned.

"Why? Why?" I broke out angrily. "I don't know about the Gypsies here, but those of my country are a little more anxious to meet their own brothers."

"¡Bravo!" she cried, and clapped her hands with delight. They had simply been trying me out. "*Bato!*" she cried to the old man. "Here's a foreign *Caloró!*" The man, who had not been able to hear our conversation, which was carried on in "deep" Romani, shook his head skeptically. "He thinks you're a *Bu'nó,*" she said smiling.

"I thought he was perhaps one himself." The thought of their father being taken for a Gentile amused them so that they burst into shrill laugh-

ter. They told me that the other men were at the Almodóvar Gate trading horses; and asked me if I had had my supper. I replied that first I wanted to see the men. They called to a boy to show me the way.

Since Arab times Cordova has been famous for horses. The horse and cattle markets held there are the principal ones of Spain; and for this reason it is the center for itinerant horse traders, the chalanes, who, like the wandering basket-makers, are the deepest of Gitanos.

When I arrived, they had just finished their dealings, and welcomed a suggestion that we take refreshment in a ventorillo. Whips were stacked in a corner, and a dozen of us sat down at a table under a vine that completely covered the patio. All were in high spirits. "A sangría!" exclaimed the leader. "I'll mix it myself." The innkeeper brought a huge pan, a couple of gallons of blood-red wine, sparkling gaseosa, golden oranges, sugar, spices, and snow from the Sierras. The Gypsy stirred them together in watchful silence as though performing a solemn ritual. The hush was broken, when the beakers were passed around, "with beaded bubbles winking at the brim." And it was not long before the sangaree had stimulated dance, and "song and sunburnt mirth."

A gray-haired *Caloró* with cachas, shears for clipping horses, stuck in his red sash, and with



a wide sombrero, the brim of which flapped as he danced, entertained us with some steps of his own invention. Others sang; but as they were chalanos, not singers, their performances were remarkable only for their fervor. It chanced that there was a professional cantador standing in the doorway; and as I had expressed my interest in cante flamenco, he was asked to join the party, and given a place beside me. He was a Gentile, a young fellow dressed in the ancient style with a frilled shirt, a bit soiled, but with beautiful filigree ornaments of gold at this throat. He had a fair voice, but there was something repellent about his shifty eyes.

On the other side of me was a Gypsy about my own age, with angular features, and a wild, but frank, attractive look. He asked my name; and as Brown, simple though it is, puzzles the foreigner, I translated it into the Spanish, Moreno. "Why, Cousin!" he exclaimed delightedly, "my own name is Moreno, Antonio Moreno. Perhaps we are related!"

When the sangaree was finished, the Gypsies arose to go to supper. To my distaste the singer followed, sticking to my side like a leech. We stopped in a large courtyard. A number of men and girls in picturesque costume were squatting on the stone flagging. Their postures, tawny skins, and the color of their Chinese mantones gave just the touch of Oriental life which Cor-

dova needed to make it something more than the skeleton of its ancient self.

Antonio had had just enough wine to make him want more, and invited me to have supper with him in a taberna. I was annoyed again to find that the *Bu'nó* singer still remained with us; but Antonio seemed rather glad that we should have some one to provide us with music. The more I saw of the *Bu'nó*, the less I liked his looks. He was far too anxious to be pleasing to me, and was obviously insincere. I also noticed that he was overzealous in filling my wineglass. The Gitano, on the other hand, seemed genuinely happy to have found a new "blood brother." And as we ate, he insisted on taking my fork and feeding me while I fed him, as a symbol of sworn friendship.

After supper we took a cab, paraded through the winding streets, and stopped at numerous wineshops on our way. At the suggestion of the cantador, we stood up in the cab, as it swayed and bounced over the rough pavement, and, mutually supporting one another, serenaded the inhabitants.

Realizing that I had had quite enough to drink that evening, I suggested that we say good night. Paying no heed to the suggestion, the cantador called to the driver to stop at another wineshop we were passing. When they got out I refused to follow. "Come, one more glass of Montilla!

It is better than Jerez!" pleaded Antonio; but I noticed that the singer said nothing, and when I called good-bye to them and drove away, there was a note of sarcasm in his voice as he shouted after me, "Go with God!"

On reaching the hotel I put my hand in my pocket to pay the driver. It was empty. My pocketbook with considerable money and some notes which I valued were gone. At once I told the proprietor of my plight, and vexed and humiliated I went to my room.

No sooner had I gone to bed than I heard a loud rapping. It was the proprietor. "You've got your money back," he said. I put on some clothes and followed him into the main room. There between a pair of police officers stood my erstwhile companions. The pocketbook with the money and notes intact was lying on the table. But it was not a question of the money. I was angry at the thought that a Romani who had called me his "blood brother" and in whom I had placed such absolute confidence could have betrayed me. Ignoring the singer, I turned on Antonio, and told him in *Caló* what I thought of him. His expression changed from amazement to one of terrible wrath. He tried to speak, but his voice choked with rage. He was like a leopard crouching in a cage, baring its fangs at the keeper who has raised the lash. If one of the policemen had not had a hand on his

shoulder, there is no telling what he might have done. "Do you wish to prosecute?" inquired the latter. Having relieved my feelings I told him he could let them go. In a flash they disappeared.

The proprietor had been looking on in astonishment at my proficiency in Gypsy. When he had recovered from his surprise, he stated that in his flurry he had forgotten to tell me that the men had brought the pocketbook of their own accord, making the excuse that the singer had found it and had forgotten to mention it to me. The police had simply been passing by, and he had called them in to tell them of the affair, when the men had arrived.

The proprietor was still completely mystified, and probably remains so to this day. As I thought it over, it all became clear. The *Bu'nó*, who doubtless was as much a professional thief as a cantador, had picked my pocket, and had either bragged of the fact to his companion, or else in taking it out to count the money the latter had recognized it as mine, and with the usual solidarity among Gypsies, had forced him to return it to me.

In return for his act of friendship I had wounded his deepest feelings. His amazement, his rage, and the natural desire not to involve his comrade, since the latter had consented to return the money, had prevented him from explaining.

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My impulse the next morning was to find him and make amends for my behavior. Still, when I recalled the look I had seen in his eyes, I thought it more prudent to keep to my original plans and leave the city.

Wishing to exchange the living Orient for its dead skeleton, and the primitive nomads of Morocco for the no less wild Gitanos, I took the train for Algeciras, on my way to Tangier.

I had found what I came to seek; I had found a "real Gypsy."



## Chapter VII

### *Tangier the Untamed*

**S**ITTING at dusk on the balcony of the Spanish fonda in Waterport Street, Gibraltar, I watched the crowd: some turbaned Hindus from a P. and O. liner outward bound from Bombay, Andalusian peasants with their mantas thrown over one shoulder, a lynx-eyed Gypsy, solemn Jews from Morocco in long, black caftan, and stately Moors in flowing white burnous and red fez.

Down the street I heard the shrill piping and droning of the pibroch, accompanied by the vibrant booming of the bass drums. A squad of kilted Highlanders and tall Redcoats marched by, the drummers crossing their arms in the air and beating the opposite sides of the drum with an arrogant flourish that delighted the little ragamuffins running along at their side. There is something about any martial music that brings a lump to one's throat, but the stirring sound of those pipes and drums was unforgettable. That handful of erect men swinging past in the shadow of the mighty cliff made one feel the pomp and power of a world empire. One seemed to hear the very beating of its heart.

From the Spanish town of Tarifa, at the south-

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ernmost extremity of Europe, across the Strait to Africa, it is only eight miles; and on a clear day the mountains seem much closer. But the distance that separates the two lands is not to be measured in miles. They lie untold ages apart. Were one to row across at this point he would find himself on landing in the midst of the Anjeras, an untamed Berber tribe, owing allegiance in name to the Sultan and to the French Protectorate, but in reality as wild and independent as any people in the remotest interior of Africa or Asia.

Every traveler who enters the Mediterranean from the West passes within sight of the white walls of Tangier. It is less than three hours by boat from Gibraltar, one of the best points for beginning a European tour; yet few tourists avail themselves of the opportunity for a glimpse at a civilization that fills the imagination with the living past, a civilization that has remained unchanged for a thousand years, primitive, barbaric, and raffiné.

Early the next morning we were steaming along the Spanish coast in close view of the bare Sierras. The "Rock" lay behind us, its precipitous gray mass stretched out like a giant Sphinx, gazing fixedly across the water toward Morocco—the unchanging and impenetrable.

Watch towers on every promontory told of the days—not long past—when Barbary pirates

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sailed the seas. They told of Christians like Cervantes carried into slavery.

Soon Tangier appeared, an amphitheater of dazzling white, rising gradually tier upon tier from the beach on one side and dropping abruptly away on the other. Here and there the expanse of flat roofs was broken by pointed minarets or the green of gardens.

On casting anchor in the bay, the steamer was surrounded by a flock of bobbing boats, filled with swarthy Moors in a brilliant array of costumes, gesticulating and shouting harsh guttural cries. It was lucky we were sure that piracy had been abolished and that these men were merely peaceful boatmen and hotel runners.

Chance brought me to the Hotel Cavilla, one of the most remarkable hostelries of the world. The owners were Andalusian, but everyone else connected with the place was native, and the lower floor was given over entirely to Arabs and Berbers. It is located beyond the walls, and an upper terrace overlooks the Socco de Barra, the principal market.

It was Sunday, the chief market day, and the animation of the scene was intense. Booths were ranged helter-skelter, of every shape and material. In one, no bigger than a dog kennel, the owner was tranquilly smoking his pipe of hashish, waiting for customers to come and buy his scraps of old iron, gathered from a hundred different

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quarters. There were venders of every sort of object, from eggs to millstones. In a niche in an arching gateway a seller of roasted meat was squatting by a tiny fire over which bits of mutton were cooking on spits. The whole Socco was a confusion of smells, cries, and color. There were peasant women swathed in clumsy costumes, with wide hats, the brims of which were supported by cords from the crown. There were tribesmen from the Rif, savage-looking Berbers, hatless Kabyles, with heads shaved except for a single lock of hair, by which they expected to be raised from their death beds to the Realms of Glory. There were aristocrats, in snowy burnous and gorgeous inner jackets, mounted on graceful Arab horses, which they caused to rear and wheel, guiding them swiftly and deftly in and out among the crowd.

As beggars on burros are not unknown, and only the poor walk, the man on foot must look out for himself. A snarling camel or a swift steed suddenly overtakes one, and he hears the warning cry, "Dahrak!" as much as to say, "Get out of the way, or God help you!"

The number of homeless vagabonds is very great, but their general lot is not hard, though their beds are not of down. I have seen them sleeping on the pavement, on the pier, and on heaps of spiny brushwood. The cost of living here is almost nothing, providing one is not too



*Peasant Women  
in the Market Place*







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exacting in his tastes. The climate is such that one may sleep out of doors without many wraps nearly all the year round, and a gunnysack will do for a burnous.

I happened to meet some of these pariahs once on the streets of an American city. They had been gathered together from the docks of various North African ports to be used as supers in the stage production of *The Garden of Allah*. One of them, who was from Tangier, invited me to visit them where they were living in the day coach of the company special, making themselves quite at home. Their one desire was to return to Africa. America had failed to impress them in the least. "You are proud of what you call your 'great organization,'" the Tangierine remarked in Spanish. "But what does it mean? You have hundreds of factories making millions of ugly things—all alike. You have cold storage plants, and when you buy a chicken it has passed through a hundred hands, has been killed a year, and isn't fit to eat!"

The costumes of the people I saw about me in the Socco were extremely individual and varied. Some of the women were veiled, but others, especially the country women, simply drew their cloaks about their faces at the approach of a man. Most of the men were shod in yellow slippers, which they scuffed along the ground. They were clad in baggy trousers, leaving the calves bare.

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Over their shirts they wore an inner cloak or jacket, often of many colors, with gold and silver embroidery; and over all, the hooded burnous, sometimes of wool so fine that it seemed more like silk. On their heads were fezzes, the universal red fez of Mohammedan lands, about which a huge turban was often wound. All the colors were extremely rich and variegated, but always mellow. Even the coloring in the faded garments of the beggars had the varied harmony of Oriental rugs.

Near the sanctuary of the patron saint of the market, Sîdi Makhifî, a group of Moors were sitting on the ground listening to a story-teller weave an Arabian Nights tale. As I approached, one of them courteously handed me a large flat stone to sit on. Though I could not understand the words, the story-teller's gestures were so profuse and so eloquent that it seemed as though I ought to have been able to follow the narrative.

Near by two half-naked tribesmen were entertaining another crowd with an exhibition of singlestick. They made such a racket as they whacked their staves together and yelled, that one would have thought that they were fighting in earnest. They sprang in the air to avoid the blows aimed at their legs, and ducked head blows, and whirled about each other like a couple of gamecocks.

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Most of the idlers had gathered around the snake charmers, a pretty pair of rascals, whom I should have hated to meet alone outside the walls. They were beating a tomtom and playing a sort of oboe, with high, piercing notes, supposedly to draw forth the snakes from a leathern receptacle—but in reality to draw the crowd. A few words at the mouth of the receptacle—a spell, no doubt—and a few waves of the hands to draw attention from the fact that he was surreptitiously tapping the leather with his foot, and suddenly a horned viper thrust its head from the aperture, hissing and darting its tongue. Instantly the crowd drew back with a shudder. The exceedingly venomous nature of the reptile, and its habit of hiding in the sand, where its tawny coloring keeps it from being easily detected, cause it to be dreaded above all else. Also, the slimy, grayish-white of its belly, and its large head with prongs above the beady eyes give it a most repulsive look.

When the scaly, writhing body was half way out, the charmer, with rolling eyes and a demoniac expression on his contorted features, seized the snake and held it close to his face. Darting toward him it caught the tip of his extended tongue in its fangs. Two beads of blood exuded from the wound, which he exhibited triumphantly to the crowd. Next he called upon Allah, and made several holy gestures. His words and motions were repeated by the awe-

## NIGHTS AND DAYS ON THE GYPSY TRAIL

struck crowd. Nowhere save in parts of Tibet are religious superstitions so deeply rooted. Immediately he took up a collection. Whether his invocation to Allah was in order that the bite might have no evil effects, or in order that the collection might be large, I could not tell; but the crowd evidently thought they had beheld a divine miracle, and gave freely.

It did not occur to them, as it would have to a Western crowd, that the reptile's poison-sac had been removed. Who could picture a barker at one of our county fairs calling upon God, between cries of "Hi-ki!" and "He eats 'em ali-i-ive!" and imagine the crowd of farmers bowing their heads and saying, "Amen!"?

Wandering about in the swarming mass of peddlers and buyers was a holy man, who inspired very different feelings. In place of garments he seemed to drip rags in frayed shreds that trickled from his matted hair and from his shoulders down his long body. From underneath his knitted brows blazed a pair of eyes, kindled by the fires of fanaticism and madness. His features were spiritual and fine. The long fingers of one hand were firmly clenched; while those of the other were extended by his side in the symbolic, transcendent gesture of Leonardo da Vinci's John the Baptist.

I had been warned to be careful in photographing, and not even to stop while passing a mosque,



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for in Morocco the killing of a "Christian dog" for offense in religious matters is still an act of virtue. Nevertheless, I could not resist the temptation to take the picture of this perfect embodiment of religious asceticism. Looking in another direction, I aimed the kodak and snapped the shutter. Had he been aware of this profanation of his image, he would only have needed to say a few words to the crowd—and they would have torn me into finer shreds than his own raiment. For a lesser misdemeanor even a native had been rent limb from limb in that very market place; and shortly before, in Fez, a number of unoffending Jews had been slaughtered purely on religious principles.

The next morning I was awakened by a terrific noise outside my window, which opened on a stableyard connected with a Fondak where caravans from the interior are lodged. Still half asleep, I had visions of someone being cruelly murdered, but the heart-rending, hair-raising cries were nothing more than the braying of some mules. No wonder Tartarin mistook the donkey for a lion, since the roaring of an African lion is mild in comparison with the clamor of an African ass. Unconcerned, the drivers were squatting on the ground preparing their morning meal.

There are no street cars in Tangier and only one or two carriages, kept merely for show. Donkey hire costs thirty cents a day, and to walk

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is to lose caste. After breakfast I engaged a donkey-boy to show me the principal sights. He was a smiling fellow of ten or twelve, with an open countenance behind which lay a surprising amount of cunning and perversity, for the only sight to which he took me was a row of houses where some Syrian women were sitting in the doorways with unveiled faces to entice the unwary stranger. My behavior seemed quite incomprehensible to him when I refused to dismount and discharged him soon after. From then on I preferred to walk—and to lose caste.

I never grew tired of wandering through the twisting streets, particularly of the upper town, where one seldom sees a European face, and where everything is strange. Even the Jews, though less colorful in their costumes, are completely Oriental in their dress and curious customs.

One morning on my way to the Kasbah, in a narrow, crooked lane, I passed a Jewish funeral. The coffin was being carried by hand to the cemetery. The naturally grave faces and the black caftans of the Hebrews inspired a somber awe. Suddenly from the house from whence the dead man had gone for the last time came the shrill wail of a woman. Shattering the solemn silence it plucked at one's heart and stirred the roots of the hair.

I kept on through the streets that zigzagged

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this way and that without rhyme or reason, now widening, now narrowing until the projecting upper stories almost met. At times I would be halted by a cul-de-sac; at other times I would come to an archway where the houses joined, and imagine that I was entering a courtyard; but no, it continued beyond. Only the slope of the land gave a clue to the direction as I wandered on through the maze.

Turning a corner, I found myself in a little open space. On the right was a house fronted with a trellis half covered with a spreading vine bearing a purple flower. Below me lay the city with its flat roofs. On beyond was the bay, curving like a scimitar. A line of silver joined the blue waters to the brown sand.

In the other direction was the entrance to the Kasbah, a horseshoe arch surmounted with embattlements. It led to another irregular open space, bordered by a mosque, a jail, the harem of the Kaid, and the palace of the Sultan. From the exterior it was difficult to tell which was which. The outer walls of Arabic buildings are bare and plain, partly because of the climate and partly because of love of privacy. All the adornment is for the shaded courtyard, where, secure from the sun and from prying eyes, life is carried on in the open air.

A tinge of blue in the whitewash which covers all the houses, from palace to hovel, gives them

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the brilliancy of snow and deepens the shadows, affording marvelous effects in black and white. Bare and unimpressive as the Kasbah certainly is at first glance, still I lingered there delighted with the effects of light and shade in the horse-shoe arches of the treasury, and on the portico where the Kaid hears the people's pleas and delivers justice in the open—tribal fashion. Surely the treasury with its arched columns retreating into dim recesses inviting the eye to penetrate its mysteries was no common storehouse of wealth, containing bonds and mortgages in neat rows. Instead one pictured heaps of gold and silver and precious stones pell-mell, with here and there a jeweled poniard.

Above the housetops rose a minaret that seemed to say, "If only you could enter!" The emerald branches of a tree waved to the imagination to peep into the forbidden garden below. But just as one sees beauty behind each heavy veil, one sees enchantment through the doors mysteriously closed, and the tiny windows impenetrably grilled and latticed. What delightful nooks, what profound dramas of life and passion one dreams of in those secluded courts!

From the ramparts one can look across the narrow Strait to Europe and the twentieth century. But the life about one is that of more than a thousand years ago. Looking into a narrow street below I saw a water carrier passing with his



*An Archway Where  
The Houses Joined*





bulging pigskin which takes the place of conduits and faucets. The tinkle of his brass bell mingled with the droning chant of a beggar tapping on a door with his staff. A hideous leper slunk by, exhibiting his blotched, swollen limbs and whining for charity. Another figure passed, whose cruel features etched themselves on my memory. Beside his black mule walked a woman with bowed head. Later I learned that he was a slave dealer. Tangier is not large enough for a slave market. When a servant or concubine is wanted, the merchant is summoned to display his human wares. Torn from those they love, in the distant interior of the continent, they are sold into uncertainty, where slight offenses are punishable by torture.

It is inadvisable to wander off the principal streets after dark. But guides are annoying, and I preferred to take my chances. One night the lure of mystery took me into the labyrinth of nameless streets off the Sûkh ed-Dahl. Like a mousetrap, it was easier to get into than to get out of. I passed a mosque. Hostile eyes glared at me from the steps. At least it was a landmark, I thought, but turning in the direction which I believed would bring me into the main street I plunged deeper into the deserted maze. At rare intervals were small electric lamps, but owing to the sharp windings of the streets their rays were soon intercepted.

A band of light across the black street and the tinkling of a stringed instrument indicated a native café. It was a mere hole in the wall, with a sort of divan encircling the tiny interior. It contained a charcoal brazier and the numerous little brass and copper receptacles for making individual orders of tea and Turkish coffee.

Three or four Moors were sitting on stools on the pavement out in front. I sat down beside them and tried to recollect the way I had come. I ordered some tea, which was served in a glass with mint, and asked the proprietor how to get to the Cavilla Hotel. He shook his head; he did not speak Spanish, almost the only language spoken by the native in addition to Arabic and various Berber dialects. One of the Moors was accompanying the phonograph, which was playing a weird chant, with a diminutive mandoline made of parchment stretched across a gourd. I noticed that he kept eyeing me as he played. I got up to go, and reaching in my pocket to pay the bill I found that it was empty. I had started out without any money.

Anyone can order tea in sign language—if tea is in sight—but one would have to be quite fluent in that medium of expression to be able to get away without paying for it. I was sinking deeper and deeper into difficulty. With some bitterness I reflected on the truth of the saying of a famous Arctic explorer, who when asked if he

had had many adventures during his travels, replied: "No. Adventure is incompetency."

Seeing that I was in trouble, the Moor who had been eyeing me approached and asked if he could be of service. He was a boy from the hotel. Allah was protecting me!

I did not care to tempt fate a second time, however, and the following evening I gave in to the pleading of a guide, a middle-aged Moor, who had begged me on several occasions to let him show me about. "Can you take me to see something truly characteristic?" I asked. He nodded, and took me down a side street and up a stairway. In a fairly large room a group of natives were seated cross-legged on the floor drinking coffee or smoking hashish in pipes with long wooden stems and little bowls of red clay. Some of them were playing on various native instruments, and one on a violin, which he held as though it were a 'cello.

An Arab boy brought us little cups of thick Turkish coffee, strong and sweet, which we sipped scalding hot. There was something theatrical, unreal about the café. I learned that it was a mere show place for tourists, when the guide, in trying to arouse my enthusiasm for the café, remarked that it was very select, so exclusive in fact that natives were not allowed! The other Moors in the establishment were mere supers, hired to give local color. It was clear

now why the coffee should have cost ten times as much as in the Arab cafés to which I had been going, and why he had offered to guide me there for nothing. Later I might have seen him going back for his percentage.

Interested in Moorish dancing, which is said to have influenced that of the Spanish and the Gypsies, I appealed to my guide to take me where I could see some. "Very well!" he replied. But I insisted on knowing first where he was going. No more tourist places! "To the café in the Small Socco," he said. I knew the establishment, a sort of café cantante where Moors and Europeans mingled, and a third-rate Spanish dancer came out and did a *danse du ventre* with a bored air, or sang in a cracked voice: "I am Moorish!" or "I'm a Gypsy!" or "I'm from Cordova!" according to her costume. I remonstrated: either a genuine Moor in a genuine Moorish dance or nothing! He shook his head. "Impossible!" The idea of an infidel daring to want such a thing! It was most extraordinary presumption! But I held my ground and offered a sum which would have no more than bought a seat at the Russian ballet in this country, but was wealth in Tangier. I dare say that he would have murdered my pet enemy for a less amount. The shakings of the head slackened. He reflected a moment, and finally, with tears in his voice, he pleaded with me not to tell a soul



## TANGIER THE UNTAMED

in Tangier of what he was going to do. We started out.

It seemed that we were going in the direction of the Kasbah, but soon I lost all notion of where we were. It was late. The streets were black and empty. No sign of any sort of guardian of the peace. Had the inhabitants complained to the authorities of the lack of protection they would doubtless have received the answer given by one of the early governors of Havana: "Do as I do; never go out after dark!" There were no sidewalks, and we kept to the middle of the narrow lanes, for fear of footpads that might be lurking in the gloomy doorways. It was impossible to see where we were stepping. At times we stumbled on the rough, uncleaned cobblestones; at times our feet sank into filth. Once I shuddered as I trod on something that softly crunched underfoot, the body of a dead rat, no doubt. In spite of the obscurity, my companion had drawn his hooded burnous about his face to prevent any possible recognition. Why the secrecy, I wondered? "Wait for me here!" he muttered, and disappeared in the darkness. I could distinguish nothing clearly. But I heard a sound. It was that of naked feet padding along the stones. I felt a chill of terror. Instinctively I made out a ghostly white-robed figure coming toward me. It passed. I was alone again.

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At last my guide returned. He shook his head. No result. He would try once more. The next time he left me in a small triangular open space. It was less dim. I discerned the shadow of a tree overhanging a garden wall, and heard the sighing of the wind in the branches, and the musical murmur of a fountain. The sweet, heavy odor of jasmine flowers and tuberose drifted by. Fast-rooted in the garden, they gave their souls to the night. From out of the imprisoning walls of some far-off courtyard softly floated the crystal voice of a woman singing a plaintive, melancholy song. It was curiously like the one I had heard in Cadiz that suggested the lines of Baudelaire:

“Musical strains that soothe and rend the heart, and seem the distant cry of human grief.”

When the guide came back he nodded to indicate that he had been successful in his quest. I followed him to a house, where he knocked twice as a signal. The door opened, and we entered through a passageway which led to a court with a balcony, off of which was a large, bare room with whitewashed walls and ceiling, crossed with heavy beams painted a peacock blue. It was lighted by a hanging lamp. Some cushions were placed on the floor for us by a woman in Arab dress. She was an Andalusian, old and squat, and ugly, with swarthy features that

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showed that her ancestors in Spain had mingled with the Moors. It was a case of reversion to type. She was a renegade from the religion of her childhood, but was no better Mohammedan than she was a Christian. While waiting she talked in low tones in Arabic with my companion.

Presently a servant appeared and said a few words to the woman, who nodded and began to beat on a tomtom made of a sort of large clay jar covered with a heavy parchment. A door opened and the dancer entered. She was nude.

On her shapely arms and ankles were a multitude of finely wrought silver rings, contrasting with the dull orange of her skin. Her youthful features were comely, but their expression was infinitely sad, with the sadness of centuries of suppression.

The dance was utterly different from those traditionally associated with the Orient. It was stately, and consisted of little steps that intertwined in intricate arabesques. The uplifted arms moved with a languid grace, the flexible body was held erect, and maintained an unbroken purity of line, while the trim feet twinkled in and out, weaving delicate patterns, now swiftly, now slowly, now pausing with arched toes momentarily suspended.

It was a solemn rite, a fixed ceremony to be performed in a certain prescribed manner, with

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none of the abandon and spontaneity of the Gypsy dances I had seen in Spain, which are never danced twice in quite the same manner. The Moorish dance was impersonal and abstract, symbolic and spiritual rather than human, and called to mind the luxuriant tracery of Moorish decorations, that always has a precise, geometric effect. I had the impression that it must have been danced with those exact steps for many ages, and that the dancer herself was merely a statue of pale bronze come to life, revealing the souls of others, dead for centuries.

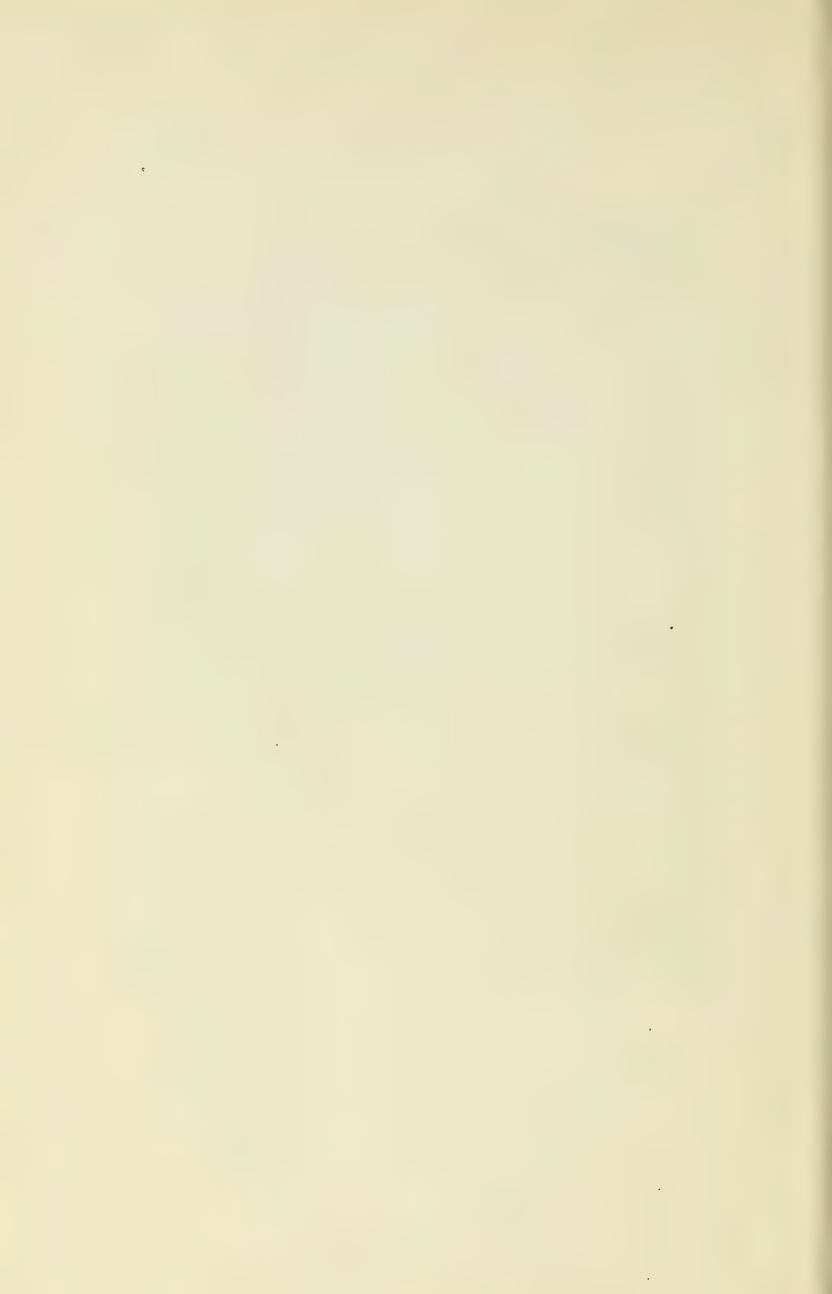
Only the drum seemed human as it throbbed and boomed lugubriously, drowning the merry tinkle of the silver anklets. There was no joy in the performance; joy had been driven from her breast long since. The girl had no soul, no individuality of her own—Mohammedan women are not supposed to have souls. She was simply a blind instrument, carefully taught and attuned, an image of plastic beauty, trained to stir the souls of beholders.

It was over. Out in the darkness of the crooked alleys once more. I asked the guide about the dancer. She was one of the wives of a well-to-do merchant who had gone to Fez, distant a week's journey by caravan. By bribing one of the guardians of the harem to escort her to the house of the Renegade on a false pretext, she had been able to escape momentarily the



*Doors Mysteriously Closed*





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monotony of her prison. A second time the Moor begged me to refrain from mentioning the entire episode as long as I remained in Tangier. It was a matter of life and death to us both. Now it was clear why he had acted with such mystery, and had drawn his burnous so carefully about his face. We reached the wide, brilliantly illuminated Socco. What a relief to emerge from that labyrinth of gloom into the light and the open!

In the morning the clear, cloudless sky and the faint breeze stirring in the palm trees above the white walls of the market place called to me to come out into the country. But it was easier planned than done. Owing to the activities of wild tribes at the very gates of Tangier, it is necessary for a foreigner to get a signed permission from his consul before he can go outside the town and the settled portions of its environs. The native government insists on this in order to divide the responsibility, and also to facilitate a rescue in case anything should happen.

With the proper document, a bag of provisions, a gray mule and a black muleteer I started out. My companion was an elderly man with a powerful physique, a short, grizzled beard and friendly features. He was over six feet, and carried himself erect with an air of dignity.

As we crossed the market place we met a wedding procession. Servants were walking in ad-

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vance to clear the way. The bridegroom and his friends on prancing steeds were wheeling about, shouting and firing guns. The bride was being carried in a large curtained box on the back of a mule. What were her emotions, I wondered, as she sat in that silken cage, stunned by the noise, the strangeness, and the uncertainty of the life before her with a man whom she scarcely knew, and to whose house she was being carried as though she were a bale of merchandise, or worse than that—a slave.

Beyond the town the road wound along through an olive grove and up a hillside shaded with tropical trees. There was something biblical about the scene. We passed a man comfortably seated on a donkey and shaded with a parasol, while his wife, heavily swathed and veiled in white, trotted along the sharp cobblestones at his side. Further on in the open country something queer was approaching. At first I could not make it out, but as it came nearer I saw that it was four women bent almost double under great heaps of fagots. I had grown accustomed to seeing Arab donkeys so heavily laden with hay as to be invisible—moving haystacks—but it saddened me to see human beings trudging along under such heavy burdens as to crush out the very semblance of humanity.

Toward noon we came to Cape Spartel, the northwest extremity of Africa. It was sur-

mounted by a tall lighthouse, maintained by international funds. To me it was a symbol of the future when all the nations and races will recognize the universal enemy, the hostile elements in nature, and instead of turning their fighting instincts on one another will co-operate in the common struggle. That the enemy is a real and implacable one was proven by the wreck of the P. and O. liner Delhi, some distance up the beach.

There we ate our lunch. It would have been much pleasanter for us both if we could have sat together and chatted while we ate, but in spite of my insistence on it, the driver refused to take such an unheard-of liberty.

From the Cape on, all trace of road disappeared. Bareheaded and with bare feet my companion waded through the drifting sands that had burned my feet encased in stout shoes. We stopped for a moment at the Grotto of Hercules, where, since the memory of man, millstones have been quarried in the flinty rock. Turning landward, we began the journey back to Tangier by a route that lay through the interior.

There were no fences to stop us as we made our way across the hills. At the foot of a wooded slope was the tent of a Bedouin. Here and there in scattered patches the fertile land was tilled by the tribesmen dwelling in huts of

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cane and thatch surrounded by a feeble stockade. Their chief protection, however, was the good will of the bandits in the region.

The muleteer was apparently tireless as he strode along in the hot African sun beside the mule on our thirty-mile jaunt. He spoke fair Spanish, and always had plenty of breath to spare for conversation. We talked of various matters: his favorite themes being the French occupation, and the bandit, Rais Uli. "Why do they come and take our poor country when they say they have a beautiful one where they come from? Why can't they let us alone? We never bothered them; so why should they bother us?" he asked.

His solution for the problem of his invaded country was very simple. He had great hopes in the bandit chief. Rais Uli was a more religious man than the Sultan, he said. And as a true defender of the faithful, Allah would surely help him. Besides, he had a larger following of determined warriors. Some day he would drive out the alien infidels, and everyone would be happy.

Further on we struck the Fez road, or rather trail; for it was merely a series of tracks like cow paths across a pasture. As we went along we were overtaken by a fellow traveler. He was an acquaintance of my muleteer, and in the course of their conversation I could distinguish the name



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of Rais Uli pronounced with great enthusiasm. It was not exactly reassuring to be traveling a deserted trail with friends and admirers of that powerful outlaw who had already carried off one American at the very gates of Tangier. But we arrived at the outer wall unmolested.

One of the most delightful places in the city was the Bazaar of Isaak Bensaqueen, an Oriental Jew, with whom I often came to chat. His shop on the lower floor of an ancient house consisted of two large rooms joined together at an irregular angle. The walls and floor were of heavy stone, and as there were almost no windows, it was dim and cool as in a cavern—a pleasant relief from the glare and heat outside.

It was a veritable museum, containing every sort of Arab and Berber handiwork, brought by caravan from the interior. Forbidden by the Koran to use human figures in their art, the Mohammedans have concentrated their efforts on purely decorative effect, in which they have attained a marvelous degree of perfection. The fact, also, that machines play almost no part in their productions accounts for the circumstance that their garments and all the little objects of daily use are beautiful not only in color and design, but also in individuality and exquisite finish.

The upper floors of the house consisted of living rooms. On the roof was a terrace overlook-

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ing the town and the sea. Here the family gathered in the cool of the evening. It had been handed down for generations. Bensaqueen had always lived there. He knew Tangier "like his pocket" and had many curious things to tell about the customs of the Moors and of his own people. Sometimes his vivacious daughter, Ayscha, joined our chats.

Knowing that I was interested in Moorish music, one day he suggested that we go to the native café on The Mountain, where the best musicians of Tangier may be heard. A donkeyman was sent for, an old Moor with deep wrinkles and an expression of immense weariness. He was called Mohammed Bon. Contrary to the laws of the Koran, he frequently indulged in eau de vie, which he secretly obtained from a Frenchman. His efforts at saying "Bon" after he had had a glass of brandy had given him the latter half of his name.

There was some question as to the price: whether we would pay him forty or fifty cents for the services of two donkeys and himself for the afternoon and evening. More than twenty minutes my companion and he wrangled in loud voices at the door of the shop. Every tone in the human voice was used, from threats to pleading. They all but resorted to tears and blows. Finally, as always happens, a compromise was reached; and each was happy, not so much be-

cause he had gained five cents, as because he had maintained the universal principle of business dealings in the Orient: never to pay the original price.

On our way Mohammed "Bon" left us for a moment to spend at the Frenchman's some of the money he had received in advance. He returned with a smile on his wrinkled cheeks, and even sang to himself as he urged the reluctant donkeys to a faster pace.

We crossed the high, wooded plateau beyond the town. On the side toward the sea were some ancient tombs cut in the solid rock by the Phœnicians. They lay in an east and west direction, following the course of the sun. Through the trees we caught glimpses of hill and sea ever combined into new vistas. Across the water lay a purple headland. It was Cape Trafalgar. And beyond, in the distance, was Cadiz, a flake of white against the dark blue ocean.

The café on The Mountain consisted of an enclosure with several booths of bamboo thatched with ferns. We ordered some mint-flavored tea, and listened to the Moorish music. I was the only European. The rest were prosperous Moors, lounging in their comfortable, beautifully colored raiment, sipping Turkish coffee and smoking hashish.

"Have you ever smoked it?" asked my companion. "Mixed with tobacco it is very mild,"

He sent the boy for a fresh pipe. Thus mixed it is a fine, golden powder with a greenish tinge, and is highly aromatic. It is called *bhāng*, and is smoked by all classes in Mohammedan countries from Morocco to India. I tried it in a pipe no bigger than a thimble. It produced an effect that was more intense but similar to several puffs of tobacco deeply inhaled: a dreamy ecstasy. It seemed as though time were standing still, and the universe holding its breath in silent rapture.

Sitting in the shadow of the fern roof, Bensa-queen discussed the drug. Hashish is a preparation of Indian hemp, as old as the ancient Egyptians. The word assassin is supposed to come from its name, which was given to the followers of a certain powerful conspirator who rewarded them with it for carrying out his sinister schemes. When eaten in a paste, or when the extracted essence is taken in coffee, the effect is very different from the mild stimulation when smoked as *bhāng*.

There are various successive stages, of which the first is a wild hilarity. One's companions seem gifted with extraordinary wit. One's thoughts provoke great bursts of laughter. This is followed by a period in which all sights and sounds are magnified in a gigantic and fantastic manner. A palm tree is a lofty fountain pouring forth torrents of green light. The clatter of

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a passing horse reverberates like thunder in the hills. The notes of a violin are like the mighty music of the spheres.

The third stage is called the kief. A coolness and a delicious languor steal over the limbs. Reclining and closing the eyes one still retains consciousness, but his thoughts wander in an immense revery. His body ceases to exist; he has become a pure spirit. Just as physical sensations were magnified in the preceding state, now his feelings are increased a hundredfold. He is borne aloft by the winged horse, Alborak, to glorious realms of dark-haired maidens of incredible beauty. Or he is a giant striding across the earth, and is so huge that a city on a hilltop with its lofty minarets is no more than a pebble underfoot. Or perhaps as the sentiment of self expands still further, he is like God, all-powerful, all-beneficent, all-knowing.

When the effects have disappeared and normal consciousness is resumed, one does not know whether a second has passed or whether it has been years since he took the drug. When one wakes from ordinary sleep he has a sense of the lapse of time. But under the influence of hashish, hours and minutes are non-existent. One is in the realm of the infinite. If you were to ask a person in the kief what time it was, he might reply: "It is eternity!"

It was somewhere on the northern coast of



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Africa that Ulysses in his wanderings came upon the lotos-eaters. Here one may find them still:

“With half-shut eyes ever to seem  
Falling asleep in a half-dream.”

Hashish is their lotos-food. Centuries have slipped by in other lands; but here all is unchanging. The lotos-eaters have but one desire:

“In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie reclined  
On the hills like Gods together, careless of mankind.”

The dusk was softly approaching. The sky was rapidly turning from azure to lilac—then back to a deeper and more transparent shade of blue. My eyes were fixed on a golden 'star above the plume-like stalks of bamboo. I was falling under the enchantment. How pleasant to remain forever there!

“To dream and dream, like yonder amber light. . . .”

## Chapter VIII

### *Bootblacks and Troubadours*

#### MÁLAGA

**B**ACK in Spain once more, on my way to Málaga, I was struck by the similarity of the landscape to that of Africa. The same gray and brown Sierras raised their barren slopes proudly in the air, as though disdaining to perform any useful function. They seemed to say: "We have a higher aim—we give you beauty." From time to time the valley widened into green oases, where the swift stream pauses in its seaward rush and gives its waters to the thirsty soil. There, far below us, in clumps of straight poplars, Noah's Ark trees, we would catch a glimpse of toy houses with white walls and red tile roofs.

Turning southward again, we entered a deeper, wilder gorge, through which the river had torn its way by sheer force. In the shadow of the overhanging cliffs we saw gnarled pines and dwarf Alpine plants clinging to crevices in the rock. Later, oleanders blooming beside the torrent. And as the ravine expanded, olive groves and vineyards. In an hour's time we were traversing the fertile plain beside the Mediter-

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anean, amid orange trees and fields of sugar cane.

Málaga has a large population of Gypsies. I had been told that I should find some living in the ruins of the Alcazaba, the Moorish Castle, that overtops the city. Deciding to look them up next morning, I sauntered out to the principal street, the Calle del Marqués de Larios, and took a seat in front of one of the numerous cafés to watch the crowd strolling up and down or taking their evening appetizer. It is a wide, decidedly modern thoroughfare with handsome shops. The only distinctly Spanish note was a sign in large letters: "Do you want a true Gypsy hat?"

"Are there any Gitanos now in Málaga?" I asked the waiter.

"Hundreds," he replied.

"Where?"

"In jail. It's their hotel."

A bootblack passed. "¡Limpia bota-a-a-as!" he droned, pointing to my shoes. I shook my head, and he started on, glancing back to see if I would not change my mind. He was a ragamuffin of twelve or thirteen with dark features and a glance that held my attention. I nodded assent, and he briskly set to work. "Are you a Gypsy?" I asked him in *Caló*.

"Sí, señor," he replied, looking up and trying to hide his bewilderment.

"So am I," I said, and held out my hand. He

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looked at his own, grimy with shoe polish, and hesitated. But as I encouraged him with a smile, he shook hands, and grinned from ear to ear. The waiter standing near us observed that I was speaking to the boy in a strange tongue, and looking contemptuously at the latter, he remarked: "You don't understand what this foreigner here is saying."

"Yes he does," I said. "We're talking Sanskrit." The bootblack grinned again, and gave me a look of gratitude for not revealing that he was a Gitano. On hearing him reply in the strange tongue, the waiter was completely mystified. When the shoes were polished, I took out the money to pay him, but it was only after considerable urging that the boy would accept it.

He went away, and returned a little later with another *limpia-botas*, who was a year or two younger, but had all the dignity and self-assurance of one thrice his age. He held himself erect with the proud, graceful carriage of the Gypsy dancers and bull-fighters. He spoke *Caló* with fluency, and made me a speech of welcome to the Romani fold in Malaga.

"It's a pity my father isn't here!" he said. "He's in jail for killing a man." There was nothing but pride and affection in his voice as he mentioned his father, and scorn as he spoke of the slain *Bu'nó*. "When a man insults you and threatens you, you have to defend yourself, don't

you?" he added; and from an inner breast pocket he pulled out an enormous clasp-knife, which he held half hidden in his sleeve.

His mother was dead. He lived with an uncle, who also looked after the older boy, his cousin, Hasul, who was an orphan.

"Come and have something to drink with us," Hasul invited. I followed them to a modest café off the main street. They each ordered a glass of hot milk at three cents a glass. It evidently weighed on his conscience that he had taken money from a strange Gypsy, even for shining his shoes, for he insisted on paying for the milk.

As it was getting late, I asked them to dine with me in a restaurant. They protested that they had had their dinner; but they offered to show me to a place where I could eat. "There is one near here where the dishes are *dui čukele*." Dishes that only cost "two dogs"—about four cents—did not sound attractive. Perhaps they knew a better place? Finally near the Alameda we found one that looked moderately appetizing. Reflecting that they had been working all afternoon, and that they scarcely could have had time to go home and dine, I insisted that they enter; and ordered a substantial meal for three.

When the waiter spread the table-cloth, Hasul whispered in my ear: "Tell him we don't need one! They'll charge you extra for it." When the food was brought in, it was evident from the



hungry way in which they disposed of every mouthful, that the glass of milk had been their only dinner. When I paid the bill, I gave the waiter some change and a dollar. The boys looked horror-stricken. Scornfully glancing at them the waiter grunted: "Didn't you ever see a dollar before?"

"He's robbing you!" said Hasul. "A dollar for three dinners! I could slit his throat!"

How should we spend the evening? They suggested that there was a bathing establishment that I might like to visit. They left their blacking boxes with a friend, and we got into a trim auto that ran to the beach. As we sped along under the palms and the plane trees in the Paseo beside the sea, their faces beamed with satisfaction. If only the other Gypsies could have seen them then, their happiness would have been absolute.

Late in the morning when I left the hotel, Hasul and Miguel were camping on the doorstep, where they had been waiting for hours. I was partially confined to my room for two days with a malarial fever; but whenever I went out I was sure to find my self-appointed bodyguard standing watch.

They told me that when they had returned to their house the first night, they had found the door locked, and had been obliged to wake their uncle from a sound sleep. He was very angry

with them for staying out, until they told him that they had been with a Gypsy.

The boys felt the responsibility of seeing that I was entertained. "We have a surprise for you to-night." Miguel announced.

"What is it?"

"¡Una película americana en el cine!" Being from America he supposed that of course an American film would be a great treat for me. "I always go to see them," he added.

I had come to Spain in search of local color, and going to a movie that I could have seen in Gopher Prairie did not seem particularly colorful. But such was the enthusiasm of the Gitanos that I had not the heart to refuse them.

My quest for romance was destined to receive another rude check that night. As it happened, we took our places in the dingy, stuffy theater next to a man whom Miguel knew. He was a frail, effeminate fellow of thirty or thirty-five, with only a few stray hairs on his receding chin. A more uninteresting creature could hardly be pictured. Miguel turned to me and whispered, "He is a smuggler."

All my boyhood notions of smugglers, gained from reading Stevenson and Scott, were of hairy, stalwart men with dirks and cutlasses, roaring oaths in voices of thunder, or of wild ruffians such as the contrabandistas of *Carmen*. And this insignificant fellow was a smuggler!

Miguel treated him with an air of good-natured scorn; while the contrabandista's bearing toward the manly little fellow was one of servile deference. He instinctively recognized in him a superior.

The moving picture was of the most conventional sort: a fair-haired hero and heroine performing miracles of horsemanship and other acrobatic feats, in the familiar surroundings of Southern California, where they are in search of buried treasure, and are pursued by hosts of Mexican and half-breed villains, from whom they are rescued through a message sent by their field wireless, which brings an army airplane to carry them away in the nick of time. My friends found the film intensely exciting; and kept up a running comment so that I would be sure to understand it. They were particularly worried for fear I should mistake the blond hero and heroine for the villains. "Those are the good ones!" they both exclaimed each time they appeared. "Those are the bad ones!" each time the Mexicans were flashed on the screen.

Miguel was especially taken with the scenes of horsemanship, mountain camps, and good badmen. "It must be wonderful to live in such a country!" he remarked. "Are there many Gypsies there?" He was obviously thrilled to meet some one who had come from the land of his dreams.

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When we came out of the theater, I asked my companions if there was a place where there was singing and dancing. Miguel replied that Las Chinitas was closed in summer; but that if I wanted, he would entertain me. If by day he was a bootblack, by night he was a troubadour. "Last carnival I made a bagful of money in the cafés. Wait here, while I go and borrow a guitar."

He returned to lead us to a place near the waterfront. It had a small stage and proscenium; and had once been a *café cantante*, but had degenerated into a *café de camareras*. The room was crowded with sailors, fishermen, and the "waitresses" who served them.

The Gitanito asked to see the proprietor, and politely requested the use of the stage. With a smile of amusement, the latter looked down at the little chap whose head scarcely came to his waist; but meeting the grave, magnetic glance of the diminutive musician he consented. Miguel turned on the footlights and raised the curtain himself. It was a "one-man show." He not only accompanied his dance by singing, but also by playing the guitar as he wheeled and stamped. The instrument was almost as large as himself, but no matter. His performance drew a burst of applause from everyone in the room.

After this lively, animated exhibition, he sang a mournful Prison Song which he had learned

from his father. The melancholy music was old as human tragedy, and had been handed down through endless generations; but the words had perhaps been composed by the man himself. His wife had died while he was in prison; and the funeral procession must have passed from the Gypsy Quarter in the old town beyond the Guadalmedina, along the Pasillo de la Cárcel in front of the jail, on its way to the San Miguel Cemetery. What a heart-rending experience! The previous horrors of confinement in prison must have seemed as nothing, in comparison to the feeling of helplessness at not being able to follow her to the grave. Doubtless the experience had been too tragic to express in all its stark reality; and for that reason he had substituted the word mother for that of wife.

"Preso en la cárcel estaba.  
Un entierro ví pasar.  
Y era la pobre de mi madre.  
Mira que no pude acompañar—  
¡Eso que pena más grande!"

"Enchained beside the prison wall,  
I saw a funeral go by.  
My mother lay beneath the pall.  
To think I couldn't go to her—  
That was the greatest grief of all!"

The boy took his seat beside us, quite unmoved by his success. He had not come there to win the approval of a lot of *Bu'né*. It was enough



for him that he should have pleased an older Gypsy from America—the land of Romance. Imagining that “El Far West” pictured in the films was a true representation, and that if the Gentiles there were expert horsemen, the Gypsies of that land must be infinitely more skilled in all that pertains to horses, I found myself a hero in his eyes.

“Take me back to America with you!” he pleaded. I tried to disillusion him, but it was of no avail. He had seen the land of liberty and limitless possibilities with his own eyes in the moving images of the screen. It must surely be a Gypsy paradise; where the Romani could rove and camp at will; where the *xundanare*, the police, were held in contempt.

“When are you leaving?” he asked me.

“Day after to-morrow, by the evening train.”

“I will go with you!” he replied with a look of determination on his handsome features. My telling him that it was impossible had no effect. “I will meet you at your hotel. I have some money saved up; and I can make more by singing and shining shoes. You can hide me under the seat when the conductor comes. Is America farther than Seville, farther than Africa?”

“What would your father think? What would your uncle say?” asked Hasul.

“If you dare tell!” Miguel replied with a stern threat in his voice.

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I was worried. I thought of the father in prison, whose one attachment to life was the little son, of whom he must have been intensely proud. I thought of him gazing for hours from the barred window down the dusty quay beside the river, which is always either a furious torrent, swirling with debris, or a barren, desolate bed of stones. It was along that quay that the boy's mother had passed before his eyes, for the last time. It was along that quay that he watched for the son, when he came on his weekly visits, bringing him the only joy that still remained. If those visits ceased the father's grief would be terrible.

There was nothing to do but use strategy. Miguel was determined to run away with me. I must leave at an earlier hour.

The next evening I went for a stroll alone in the old part of the city. Hearing a lively air played on a piano in a café, I stopped. Curtains were drawn at the windows. There was an appearance of mystery about the place so intriguing that I entered. A waitress brought me the soda I ordered. “¿Me convidas?” she asked, familiarly inviting herself to have something. It took some time to persuade her that I had no desire for her company. I looked around the room.

Sitting at a table apart were a woman, a young girl, and a man, In a case beside him was a guitar. There was a look of profound discour-

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agement on all their faces. The table was empty of glasses, and they sat staring blankly in complete hopelessness. From their dress and features I guessed that they were Gypsies, and invited them to join me. At the sound of *Caló* their faces brightened, and they graciously accepted the invitation. For some time the man looked at me intently. "Where have we met before?" he asked. His face was certainly familiar. Suddenly he remembered. "It was in Paris, at the Feria!"

It was Matías, one of the three most famous Gypsy dancers, with an international reputation. Before the war the Feria was the most distinctive and artistic of the night cafés in Montmartre, if not the only one that could be so described. It was decorated in excellent taste in a purely Spanish style. The entertainment consisted of Andalusian and Gypsy dances, and was provided by Gitanos. The one Parisian note was the fact that nothing was served but champagne.

I had seen Matías frequently in Paris, until the sudden disappearance of the troupe. They had received a higher offer from a theater in St. Petersburg, and Gypsy-like they had left without warning.

Meanwhile the war had broken out, and of the thousands of francs and roubles which he had made, barely enough remained to return to his family in Spain. He had lived like a Prince,

always thinking that there would be time enough to save—later.

It was humiliating to return to his family with empty pockets, and to be obliged to work once more in *cafés cantante*, after having been applauded in the great *cafés* and theaters of England, France, and Russia. But there was one consolation. Though the money he had made abroad had taken wings, he had found on his return a priceless jewel in the person of his little daughter, Paula, who already had learned to dance divinely. It had been a joy to train her further, and to dream of the day when she would be the talk of Europe.

When I told him that Paris was recovering its old gaiety, and that the *Feria* was opening again, though without its artistic atmosphere, he asked me to write a letter to the proprietor for him. He himself dictated it, with the help of the piano player, and a guitar player, who had joined our group. As he praised the ability of his fifteen-year-old daughter, her eyes sparkled. Already she imagined herself in Paris, of which she had heard such glowing accounts from her father.

Matías had recovered his spirits, and taking out his guitar he played a *solea* for his wife to sing. A drunken *señorito* at the next table turned around and shook her chair as she sang. With patience bred of long suffering and bitter

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experience with the *Bu'né*, Matías and his wife choked all signs of resentment, but the eyes of the little daughter blazed with wild rage. She was the image of the pantheress fresh from the jungle, and as yet untamed.

The owner of the establishment was a Gypsy woman, with very dark and extremely handsome features. When I was introduced as a *Caloró*, she invited us to have anything we wanted. I asked for another soda, explaining that I was recovering from a malarial fever. "No!" she protested with a smile. "You are no true Gypsy. A Gypsy is never sick!" She had just received a bottle of rare old Malaga, and insisted on our trying it.

When we had finished the Malaga we all took leave of one another, Matías asking me to come and see him in the morning.

On the way to his house I saw a placard telling of the Feria in Antequera. I was anxious to see a fair in one of the smaller cities unfrequented by tourists, and decided to go that very day. Antequera was on the way to Granada, where I had been planning to go. There was still time to see Matías.

I found him living in a picturesque old house with a row of columns on one side of the patio and an ancient fig tree in the center, under which a swarm of unwashed Gitanitos from the neighboring Gypsy quarter were rollicking.



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"You must see Paula dance," he said. "Come, hijita!" Taking her father's Cordova hat and her mother's Manila shawl, she danced in the checkered shade of the fig tree with all the sinuous voluptuousness, the passion, and the fierce pride that revealed the mature artist. There was no exaggeration in the closing lines of the letter Matías had dictated: "I am sure you have never seen anything like this number on our program." Sooner or later Paris was to have a new sensation.

My friend accompanied me to the Plaza, where we had coffee together. A flood of recollections of his joys and triumphs flowed irrepressibly from his tongue. When he was in London dancing at the Alhambra he had met another Spanish Gypsy, who was a painter. In London, too, he had known a wealthy English Romani who had called for him every day in his motor and had taken him to a fashionable café. But Paris, the capital of the world, was the center of his most cherished memories. There he had taught Regina Badet, the famous dancer of the Opera Comique, how to play the guitar. And it was in Paris that Zuloaga had painted his portrait. Although Matías was an illiterate Gypsy, the great artist had treated him as a confrère. And whenever he seemed tired of posing, Zuloaga had smiled and suggested a drink. But the most amusing experience of all was a week-end party

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at the chateau of a marquise. The third day, when they were drinking champagne under the trees in the park, she had wanted to be a Gypsy for a moment, and had borrowed his short Andalusian jacket. When she returned it, there was a rose in the buttonhole.

As Matías said good-bye, he added, "Who knows but we may meet again!"

"Hasta luego. Until then."

I had already paid my bill at the hotel, and sent my belongings to the station by the omnibus driver. Avoiding the streets where there was any chance of being seen by Miguel, I walked to the train, looking about anxiously, and feeling like an escaped criminal. Perhaps those keen Gypsy eyes had seen me. What would I do if he were there? But as he was expecting me to leave that evening, he was doubtless either making his last plans, or waiting for me at the hotel.

As I scanned the crowd at the station, what a relief to find that he was not among the people there! How long it seemed before the line at the ticket-window, advancing by inches, gave me a chance to get my ticket, and get out to the platform! It would have been amusing to travel about with a youthful troubadour; but the vision of the waiting father would have haunted me forever.

## Chapter IX

### *The Fair at Antequera*

THE train for Antequera was packed. Everyone was going to the fair. Since the long wooden benches that run the full width of the third-class carriages are not divided into separate seats, there is always room for one more. The occupants of a compartment squeezed to make room for me. The racks overhead and part of the floor were filled with luggage of every description, including a bundle of hens with their feet tied together. I was forced to hold the rucksack on my lap. An elderly peasant woman anxiously looked in the door in quest of a seat. Instead of sending her away, we all squeezed together a little tighter; someone helped her in, and another took her large square basket and found a place for it. The tail of a huge salt fish protruded from it, and was much in the way; but no one seemed to mind the inconvenience.

Shortly after the train had started, several people opened baskets, jars, and paper parcels containing food, richly flavored with garlic, and began to eat; but not without first asking everyone else if they would not share their lunch. As a rule the offers met with a polite refusal and a

wish of "Buen provecho." They were no mere form of politeness, however, but a real expression of neighborliness and good will, and occasionally they were accepted. A man with a bag of prickly pears littered up the floor of the car with the slippery, spiny peelings in order to prepare enough for all. Another man passed around his cigarettes, and his friend followed suit with a bottle of colorless liquid. It was aguardiente, the Spanish variety of "white mule," in comparison with which American "moonshine" is as mild as its name. I thought it was water, and as I had not had time to get a drink from the water carrier at the last station, I tilted the bottle in hopes of quenching my thirst. What a mistake! It gagged me, seared my mouth, and set me coughing for several minutes.

There was a large family in the compartment, that made themselves completely at home. As we passed through the gorge, the children would scramble over the baggage piled on the floor and over everyone's lap to get a look at the scenery from the one narrow window. There were several short tunnels, and as soon as we reached one of these, they would scramble back to their places, stepping in the darkness on everybody's corns. At regular intervals this would be repeated.

The grown-up daughter had torn a large hole in her stocking, and took advantage of one of

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the tunnels to change it. Unfortunately the tunnel was shorter than the rest, and its sudden ending surprised her with one bare leg, which she desperately sought to hide. The parents and the baby were less prudish. When the latter shrilly cried: "¡Quiero mear!" the father held it out of the window; but the mother, fearing it would fall, pulled him back—and a fine stream trickled on the various bags and parcels on the floor.

At each tunnel the compartment took in more and more smoke. The window stuck, and by the time it was raised, we would be out in the open again. It was just as well, perhaps, as the smoke was no more suffocating than the garlic breaths and other smells that would have choked us had the window been closed.

At Bobadilla everyone was silently praying that someone would get out. But instead, a pair of Guardias Civiles got in. In unslinging his rifle from his shoulder, one of the Guardias knocked the skull cap from the bald head of a priest. As the latter jumped up to get his cap, he slipped on the peelings of prickly pear and fell on his hands in the spiny mess. In rushing to his aid, the Guardia stepped on the bundle of hens, which set up a terrible squawking.

"Thank God we're almost there!" the father exclaimed. And in truth we were only ten miles from Antequera; but the engine that had brought



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us thus far continued to Cordova, and we were obliged to wait for another from Seville, with which we made connections—on the time-table. Our car was drawn onto a sidetrack, where we waited three hours!

It gave a good opportunity to observe one's fellow travelers. Opposite me were two women, contrasting strongly in appearance. One was thin and wrinkled, with one of the hardest faces I have ever seen. It was scarred, as though by a knife some years before; but the cruel lips and vindictive eyes showed that the spirit within was even more deeply scarred. She was flashily dressed. Her companion, on the other hand, was poorly clad, but young and pretty, and as fair as the other was sallow. She was plump and good-natured; nothing seemed to bother her.

Twice the older woman had told the various passengers in a loud voice how the day before she had been robbed of two thousand pesetas and some jewelry. Taking a newspaper clipping from a handbag containing an egg and numerous other articles, she showed it to one of the Guardias, and asked him to read it out loud. It told how she had gone to a bathing establishment in Malaga with her lover, an individual known to the police as "El Galluzco," who had taken her valuables. She seemed quite proud of finding her name in the papers.

With her was a ten-year-old boy, evidently her

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son, who was likewise over-dressed, and whom she nagged continually. He musn't do this; he musn't do that! Every now and then she would slick his hair, or moisten her handkerchief with saliva and rub at a speck on his cheek till the flesh was red and smarting, or dig at his ear till he winced.

She got up for a moment to call to a passing aguador for some water, and laid her handbag containing the egg beside her on the bench where her son had been sitting. "Haven't I told you not to lean out the window?" she cried as she jerked him away and began to lean out herself, shouting, "Aguado-o-r." Crestfallen, and without heeding where he sat, the boy returned to his seat. There was a crunching, squashy sound. He jumped up looking aghast. Turning around the mother saw the flattened handbag, and began to pummel him, speechless with rage. A kindly peasant intervened and received a torrent of pent-up abuse. With a rueful look she opened the bag. The egg, which she had been carrying with such care, was mingled in a yellow mass with various objects: a bunch of keys, a handkerchief, some coins, and a powder puff.

Once or twice during the journey I thought I heard the sound of Gypsy being spoken; but I was not sure until I caught the words: "It serves the old *lumia* right!" The speaker and the man to whom he was talking turned out to be Gitanos,

the former a guitar player named Carlos, and the latter a peddler of smuggled goods. "When we get to Antequera," Carlos remarked, "I'll sing you a seguidilla Gitana that will make you weep, unless you have a heart of stone."

On arriving I lost sight of the Gypsies in the crowd. The station, like many in Spain, was in a valley, while the town was situated on a hill a mile away. All the carriages and hotel omnibuses had been filled and had gone, before half the passengers had left the train. I waited for a long time but they did not return. Thinking I would steal a march on the others who were waiting, and would make sure of getting a room at a hotel, I decided to walk in spite of the weakened condition in which the fever had left me. There was no parcel-room where I could leave my baggage, and I was forced to carry it.

It was growing dark by the time I reached the outskirts of the town. "Now I shall get a good night's rest," I thought as I walked into the hotel. The clerk was sorry to inform me that all the rooms were taken, and suggested that I try the Hotel de Comercio. There they thought I might get a bed, at least, at the Fonda de la Castaña. At the Inn of the Chestnut it was the same old story. Gradually descending in the scale of Spanish hostelries I went from hotels to fondas, from fondas to posadas, from posadas to paradores, but without avail. At one of the lat-

ter places I was told that the baker on the Plaza was renting rooms during the fair. I went there, only to be informed by the baker's wife that a troupe of bull-fighters had taken the place by storm, and that she and her family were sleeping on the floor in the bakeshop.

Though the days are blazing hot, the nights are cold, even in Seville; and here in the Sierras, with snow-capped peaks only sixty miles distant, it was certain to be too chilly to sleep in the open without a blanket. Discouraged, I stood in the Plaza and watched the crowd. A boy was distributing handbills. I read one. Here at last was luck! The famous Gypsy cantadora, La Niña de los Peines was to sing that night in the theater. I had missed her in Barcelona. I had also missed Manuel Torres, the other great singer of cante hondo, "deep song." In Jerez, his native city, I was told that he was in Seville. On arriving in the latter city I found that he had left for Malaga shortly before. There I was again a few days too late. His name was still on the billboards, but he had gone—no one knew where. This had been a deep disappointment; but after all, according to Otero, Torres was getting old, while La Niña Peines was in her prime.

I left my baggage in a wineshop, and went in search of the theater. The main street was jammed with peasants from the Sierras, hucksters with their gaily decorated stands, and

Gypsy horse traders with frilled shirt fronts, who were swaggering along with their whips. At one of the cross streets was a sign calling attention to the various attractions at the theater. Beside it was a barker. "Come and hear the Grand Opera of Gypsy singing!" he was shouting.

Long before the performance began, the house was packed. Almost the entire two first rows were filled with Gitanos, well-to-do chalanés for the most part, whose wives and daughters were dressed in high combs, and beautifully embroidered shawls that must have each cost thousands of pesetas.

The entertainment was typical of what the Spanish call *variedades*. The first number was a dancer, *La Varguita*, who evidently was a *Gitana*, though not advertised as such. The next was also a *Gitana*, who sang *saetas*, religious folksongs known as "arrows," sung to music no less Moorish than that of the *Malagueñas*. The third was a pretty blond, who changed her costume with each song and dance. She was the only Gentile performer that evening; but that did not prevent her from appearing with a tambourine and the traditional Gypsy garb—of the stage—and singing: "I am a Gypsy." When she came forth as a *Serrana*, in the costume of the *Sierras*, the mountaineers in the audience burst into wild applause.

Their enthusiasm was nothing, however, in



comparison with that with which they greeted the entrance of La Niña de los Peines. A fringed Chinese shawl was draped about her shoulders, with the two ends crossing her bosom in long folds. It was black, with small designs of flowers and butterflies, embroidered chiefly in rose, that gave a jeweled effect. It was a marvel of Oriental needlework. She was far from good-looking, but her homeliness was simpatico, appealing. Behind those irregular features one felt the rare character of the woman: greatness and loveliness.

She took her place beside the guitar-player, and began to tap the rhythm of a bulería with her closed fan. The strings took up the beat with great brio. Dropping the fan she accompanied the instrument with ringing handclaps that accentuated the extremely complicated measure. When she started to sing, the handclaps were softer, muted, so to speak, like violin strings. Clapping is the oldest and most primitive type of accompaniment. And the Gypsies have brought it to a state of perfection. Not only do they obtain great variety of tone, but above all, variety of accentuation. They have made it an art like any other, necessitating years of practice to be a master.

Her voice was rich and mellow; not the clear, liquid notes of a Galli-Curci; but rather, the warm, vibrant tones of a Caruso, less dazzlingly

pure, but tingling with emotion. No wonder the words "Grand Opera," which had amused me beforehand, were used in regard to her singing. The melody of the song was surprisingly simple, but repeated with so many variations as to be as elusive as moonbeams dancing on the waters, or as the waves themselves—ever the same, yet ever changing. It was applauded madly, and repeated three times; but I could no more retain the tune and hum it afterwards, than I could a symphony, though certain phrases would return with haunting persistency.

Her songs were those of her people. One of them began in *Caló*:

"*Nakelo con Undibel. . . .*

"I talk with God. . . ."

Another was the song of the wandering basket makers, the wildest of the *Calé*.

"*Cuando voy por los caminos. . . .*

"When I walk the open road. . . ."

She sang with an air of dignity not often seen in flamenco singers, who, with absolute abandon, contort their faces and bodies in their efforts to produce full, vigorous notes. Still, the quivering of the silken fringes of her shawl told of a tenseness of feeling that was echoed by the audience, sitting breathless, stirred to the inmost fibers. It was almost as thrilling to watch the

effect on the crowd as to listen to her singing. Especially were the Gitanas in the front rows carried away by it. Tearing the flowers from their hair, they threw them at her feet. I caught a glimpse of the Gypsy dancer standing in the wings, sharing their spontaneous delight, with a look of beatitude. Now I understood why La Niña Peines had refused to sing for the King and Queen in a "typical" Andalusian fiesta. Being the idol of an audience like this, composed of peasants and Gypsies, to whom her art was supreme, meant more to her than being an object of curiosity and the momentary lion of the Court.

Three performances were scheduled, so that everyone at the fair would have a chance to hear her. I went back each time, and was no less entranced than I had been at first. I forgot that I was tired, that I was weak from illness, and that I had no place to sleep that night.

It was nearly two o'clock in the morning when I finally left the theater. There was still a fairly large crowd in the semi-private Casino, which had been thrown open to the public. Still intoxicated by the singing, I sat down to a cup of coffee, but I was scarcely aware of what I was doing, or of what was going on around me.

Some time later I was startled from my revery by Carlos, the guitar player I had met on the train. La Niña Peines had just been entertaining some twenty Gypsies at a supper party.

"What a pity you missed it! Where have you been?" Like El Gallo, the Gitano bull-fighter, who has made and spent enormous sums, she takes delight in giving pleasure to those of her race. She has feasted many a supperless *Caloró*.

When I spoke to Carlos about my difficulty in finding a room or even a bed, he laughed. "Why, that's nothing!" he said, as though surprised that a Gypsy should even mention such an unimportant detail. "Come, let's take a walk!" he added.

The gutters of the main street were lined with sleeping figures, not drunkards, as they might have been in the land of prohibition, but vendors beside their stands, and peasants wrapped in their blankets. It often puzzles the foreigner to see the country people, in a region as warm as Andalusia, wearing heavy sashes and carrying blankets, folded and slung over one shoulder. Thus equipped they may sleep à la belle étoile, wherever night overtakes them. And even in the *paradores* they frequently spread their blankets on the floor rather than sleep in a bed.

For a long time we wandered through the deserted streets. Here and there the rays of the moon fell in brilliant patches on the white walls of the houses. Above the town loomed the hill, surmounted by the Moorish castle with its ruined towers; and beyond, against the clear star-lit sky,

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the dense black lines of the Sierra de los Torcales, the Mountains of the Caves, a region of huge caverns and fantastically shaped rocks of red marble.

There were several Gitanos in the Casino when we returned. Some were stretched out on the leather bench along the wall, and others were drinking coffee to keep awake. A discussion was going on as to which class of Gypsies were the most friendly and affectionate, the blacksmiths or the horse traders. It was finally conceded, even by the smiths present, that the chalanés were more kindly to other Gypsies, because they were constantly going about from place to place, and mingled less with the Gentiles.

When the sun rose I walked to the outskirts of the town to try to find a place where I could take a nap; but nowhere was there a patch of grass or even shade where I could lie down. However, I found a parador where the guests were taking turns sleeping. The ground floor was a stable, but the upper quarters were clean and airy. As one lodger got up, another took his place. The continual coming and going, and the noise below made it difficult to more than doze. Also, I was anxious not to miss the cattle market, the chief feature of the feria, and at ten o'clock I was on my way to the place where it was held.

A vast hillside was dotted with cattle of every



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description, herded in bands by their owners. There were no pens even for the bulls, which were carefully guarded in a place apart. The majority of the animals for sale or barter were horses, more than a thousand of them, from worn-out nags to splendid Arabs. The majority of the owners were Gypsies. Most of them were so busily engaged in coaxing, wheedling, persuading, and inveigling prospective buyers that they had little time for conversation.

The Gentile dealers worked separately, but the Gypsies banded together. If a peasant showed any interest in a horse or a mule, seven or eight Gitanos would cluster about him, each one offering some fresh argument, or answering objections with extravagant praise, until by sheer weight of persistent cajolery and suggestion the man would be induced into buying. In spite of the suspicion in which they are held, the Romanies were doing a thriving business. Some of them were wealthy.

Toward noon the dealings slackened. I spoke to one of the chalanés, who was very cordial, and invited me to a café that had been improvised on the hillside by stretching a piece of canvas over poles. The place was crowded with *Calé* in a jubilant mood. At the table next to ours was a Gypsy with his little daughter, a girl of some eight or nine years. I had observed them at the theater, applauding *La Niña Peines*. Some sort of discussion was going on, though I did not catch

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the words until the father lifted his child to the table and cried: "Show them, *čaborí!* Show them how to dance an alegría!" He began to sing a copla and clap his hands. Raising her arms and snapping her fingers, the Gitanilla began a dance that would have put to shame the dancer on the stage the night before.

That afternoon there was a bull-fight in the Plaza de Toros. On the way to it I met Carlos. He was looking very discouraged. "What's the matter?" I asked him.

"The malditos *Bu'né!* May evil daggers strike them! They've done me out of all my money, at cards. Thirty dollars!" I consoled him with a truism on the foolishness of gambling. "Yes, I know," he replied. "I wouldn't have played if I hadn't thought I could cheat them."

His chief regret was that he would miss the bull-fight. He did not mind going without eating all day; but not to see the función was another matter. He had borrowed a dollar from a cousin, a bootblack. "Think of it! He was cleaning the shoes of a *Bu'nó* when I asked him for it!" It had followed the other thirty. Then he had pawned his twenty dollar guitar for two pesos. "And I lost those too!" he lamented. "With my guitar I'm somebody, I'm an artist. Without it I'm nobody!"

I had a ticket for the shady side of the bull-ring, and exchanged it for two in the sun. In

the jam at the entrance he said to me in *Caló*: "Keep your hand on your purse. There are a lot of pickpockets around us—I know them."

The corrida was uninteresting except for an unexpected incident. Two of the matadors were younger brothers of famous bull-fighters, on whose reputations they depended for engagements. The third was in poor trim. Part of the crowd was bored, and the rest were angry. The last bull to be killed was a powerful creature, and the matador was obviously afraid. With each rush it made, he would leap aside two or three paces, ready to flee altogether. "Give us our money back!" some shouted. "Thief!" shouted others in chorus. "A la cárcel! To jail with him!"

Suddenly a young Gypsy boy jumped into the ring. From underneath his coat he pulled out a red rag. In his right hand he held a stick for a sword. Running up to the beast he waved his rag. Not a sound was heard. Everyone in the crowd was holding his breath. Nine times out of ten when an inexperienced youth tries conclusions with a full grown bull he is at least knocked down and trampled on, provided he is not collared and dragged off to prison first. It was too late to catch him. The bull charged. But the lad avoided him by a hair's breadth, and held his ground courageously. The cheering was deafening.

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The matador's pride was hurt, and he yelled, "Get that boy!" One of the toreros caught the stripling by the arm, but the latter was quick, and wriggled out of his clutch. A second time he faced the charging animal, with equal success, and even greater applause. 'This was more than the matador could bear. He started to chase the Gitanito around the ring. Being stoutish he ran with the grace of a young elephant, and was no match for the nimble lad, in spite of the fact that the latter had to double in his tracks when he came to the barrier, where he caught sight of a policeman waiting to grab him. Knowing that this was the nearest he could ever get to the youth, the matador, in a burst of rage, aimed a mighty kick. It fell short. The bull-fighter lost his balance and stumbled. The audience was roaring with laughter.

The officer of the law vaulted the barrier with a flourish, as much as to say: "Watch me put an end to this farce." But, like everyone else, he had forgotten the bull. The animal was just about to pursue the torero, who was pursuing the Gypsy, when it caught sight of the policeman and made for him. With more speed than grace he turned and scrambled over the wall.

Thinking that kindness and strategy might accomplish more than force, another matador called to the boy, promising him immunity from the law if he would leave the ring of his own free

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will. At this, the youth surrendered. The second matador accompanied him to the edge of the arena, patting him on the back, while the crowd cheered. But it was one thing to promise, and another to fulfill. According to the law of the land, the policemen were obliged to arrest him, as it is a serious offense for a spectator to enter the ring during a corrida. There was a long argument between the torero and the municipios, which ended in the latter taking the Gitanillo off to jail, amid the hootings and threats of the mob. But what did the boy care? A few weeks of prison were not too great a price to pay for his taste of glory.



## Chapter X

### *In the Shadow of the Jail*

#### GRANADA

**T**HE Gypsies of Seville are the tamest; those of Cordova have best retained their original customs and language, while those of the Sierras are still the wildest and most primitive, the best dancers and the most lawless rovers.

Granada is one of the few European cities to which romance still clings. In the strangeness of its beauty only Venice is comparable; and the wonder-inspiring quality of Venice is less intrinsic, depending more on one's mood and point of view. To the inhabitants the Grand Canal is no more extraordinary than Fifth avenue to the New Yorker, or the Strand to those who live in London. Even Rousseau, the father of Romanticism, was quite untouched by its unusual picturesqueness. Granada, on the other hand, has from the earliest times stirred the imaginations of both strangers and inhabitants.

Familiarity does not dull their sense of wonder. To-day they still sing a folk song expressive of their idea of the miraculous nature of the city:

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"Granada y Generalife  
Un día los hizo Dios,  
Cuando dando un paseíto  
Hacia esta tierra bajó.

"Granada and the Generalife  
Were the work of God's own hand,  
Once when he was pleasure strolling  
And descended to this land."

For centuries some of the Granadinos have believed that the Alhambra was the work of Arabic magicians; that it was suddenly brought into being by a spell, and that a day would come when it would as suddenly vanish.

As one stands beside the Generalife, the summer palace of the Moors, in the shadow of cypresses centuries old, and gazes on the glistening domes of the snow-capped Sierra, or down the verdant chasm of the Darro across to the Sacred Mount with its labyrinth of mysterious grottoes, or as one looks about the garden with its profusion of flowering shrubs and whispering rivulets flashing along the very balustrades, or at the Generalife itself, with its arabesques so immaterial and spiritual in their beauty, it seems as though one had beheld the scene in some other life. Suddenly it bursts on the consciousness that one has seen it in the wondrous, unearthly vision of Kubla Khan. Scarcely a detail is missing.

In the foreground, the pleasure palace:

"With walls and towers girdled round:

And here were gardens bright with sinuous rills  
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;

And here were forests ancient as the hills,  
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.  
But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted  
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!"

Even the white summit of the Sierra forms an essential part of the vision, rising as though suspended in the purple mist:

"The shadow of the dome of pleasure. . . ."

"It was a miracle of rare device,  
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice."

Not only is Granada singularly favored by the beautifying handiwork of the Moorish artists; but also by a wealth of associations with ancient ballads and traditions that bathe it in a golden atmosphere of poetry.

Granada has another advantage over Venice: it is not overrun by tourists. The neighboring Alpujarras is still a wild mountain region, without trains, electric cars, and noisy excursionists. Each time I have ascended to the Generalife I have been the sole admirer—accompanied only by dreams and phantoms of the past.

It is a great pleasure to the traveler to return to a place which he has visited conscientiously, and to have the feeling that he is in no way duty

bound to see the sights, and can wander when and where the mood leads him.

My immediate desire was to visit the Gypsies in their caves beyond the Albayzín. As I walked up the main thoroughfare of the city I paused only long enough to glance up a side street at the delicate tracery and colored honeycomb vaulting of the horseshoe arch of the Casa del Carbón, once a granary and caravansary for Moorish merchants. One of the charms of Granada is to find, when least expecting it, some beautiful bit of architecture negligently standing amid squalid or mediocre modern surroundings.

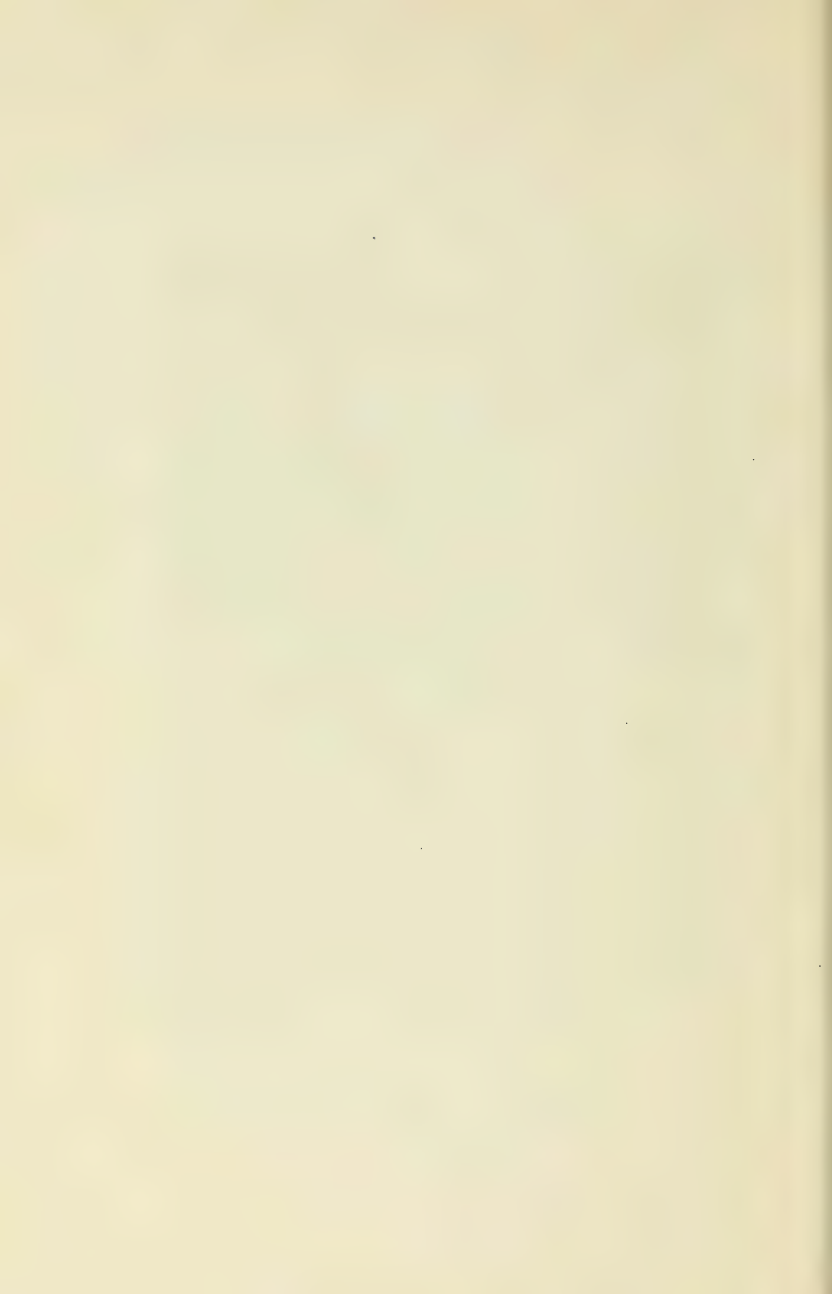
Continuing along the Carrera del Darro, one of those streets which make all of us long to be painters, I passed a house which is now a miserable tenement, but which in the eleventh century was an elegant Moorish bath. Part remains: a sort of underground cloister, with arches and marble columns around the basin, where the white bodies of the fair bathers glided through green waters, or reclined voluptuously in cool niches motionless as statues. But I did not stop there, nor at the Casa del Chápiz, in the Cuesta. At that moment the ancient palace, with its remains of lovely stucco work and carving above the svelte doorways, only served as a landmark to indicate the beginning of the Sacro Monte path, where the Gitanos live in their network of caves.

At the cavern where I once had lived with a



*The Horseshoe Arch  
of the Casa del Carbón*





chalán and his wife, La Josefa, a group of strange Gypsies were sitting in the doorway. I enquired for my old friends. They had never even heard of them. Surely it was foolish of me to come back after eight years and expect to find any *Gypsies* just where I had left them! Still it was a distinct disappointment to miss the kindly faces. After trudging up and down the winding paths in the jungle of cactus, I discovered a family that remembered having heard that Josefa and her husband had gone to Buenos Ayres. Other friends whom I had hoped to see again were dead.

Pepe, the famous guitarrista, who was looked upon as a sort of chief, and maintained his prestige largely through his marvelous skill in playing the guitar, had died in jail of a broken heart. He had become involved in the political quarrels of a *Bu'nó* who had befriended him, and had killed a henchman of the opposite party in a revolver duel. Pepe did not long survive his imprisonment.

Accustomed for many years to direct the dances held almost nightly in the Gypsy Quarter, his life had been one of constant joy and animation. And then to suddenly find himself in the dreary prison, in the heart of beautiful Granada, so near to his friends and yet so cruelly cut off from them, was more than he could endure. To a Gypsy the loss of freedom is particularly

terrible. Complete unrestraint is part of their very nature. No wonder that in the shadows of the jail he should have withered away and died.

A near relation of his, who was also a remarkable guitar player, and extremely handsome, had likewise met a horrible death through mingling with the Gentiles. I remembered having gone with him once to the Montillana, a café cantante where he had obviously been on too familiar terms with characters of the worst type. After that he had come on several occasions with his guitar, and vainly endeavored with his beautiful playing to induce me to follow him to his haunts.

Not a single person whom I had known was left; but among Gypsies one fortunately makes friends quickly. The new inhabitants of the cave where I had lived made me welcome and asked me to have supper with them. They had been dancers in their younger days. Two of them had been at the Paris Exposition, and had been engaged to dance at the Opera Comique in a production of *Carmen*. While I was anxious to show my proficiency in Spanish Gypsy, they were equally anxious to show how much French they knew. Each time I addressed them in *Caló* they would reply in French. Like Mrs. Petulengro, in a scene in *Romany Rye*, which once had seemed forced and exaggerated, these former artistes considered la belle langue française more

genteel. And the same thing had occurred in talking to the wife of a Gypsy horse trader in Antequera two days before!

"Let's go and see the danza!" they suggested. Two carriages were standing in front of the place where Pepe had lived. It was the largest and most elaborate cave in the quarter; and now had a high iron fence extending to the road. A policeman was guarding the gate. Inside we caught a glimpse of a group of French tourists sitting very stiffly on their chairs watching the dance. It doubtless gave them quite a thrill to be in the place which René Bazin and other well-known writers had falsely led them to believe was filled with frightful dangers, a place where they would need the protection of the law. They would have been even more thrilled had they known that the cave belonged to the family of a murderer.

Realizing that their audience were curiosity-seekers, rather than connoisseurs, they gave a performance that was quite perfunctory. Estimates of the Gypsy dancers of Granada vary greatly. It is because they never dance their best except when among themselves; and when dancing for outsiders their execution is always in a direct ratio to the keenness of appreciation of the onlookers. Unlike the ballet, for instance, it is less a matter of technique than of the inspiration of the moment.

When it was over the policeman opened the

gate and held out his hand for a tip. He was part of the performance—at so much a head.

Every day I returned to the Sacro Monte Quarter. A Gypsy my own age, Perico, attached himself to me, and together we explored the most interesting portions of the city and the surrounding country: the horse fair, the Cartuja, the Alhambra and the Albayzín. Our favorite walk was along the path that skirts the high, steep slope from which the Generalife rises, and that leads to the Fuente del Avellano. In every direction the views are enchanting, but my eyes turned chiefly to the opposite side of the valley where the Gypsies' caves may best be observed.

The spring, which the Moors called 'Ain ad-da'ma, The Spring of Tears, has always been a special haunt of poets, and has been sung in Arabic and Spanish. Shade trees bend over it, hazel bushes border it, and farther down the slope are many rose vines and pomegranates. There we would throw ourselves on the grass, and Perico, who was something of a poet, though he could not read or write, would sing me Gypsy songs of his own or others' improvising, or teach me new words and hidden lore of the Gitanos.

One of the curious things he taught me was a Gypsy password, known to many Andalusian *Calé*. It is used on meeting another Gitano, or one who appears to be of the blood, in a crowd



## IN THE SHADOW OF THE JAIL

of Gentiles. You casually remark, “¿Hace calor? Is it a warm day?” Among the people “calor” is pronounced like *Caló*. The answer, “Bastante que hace. It’s warm enough,” indicates that one is a Gypsy. The large percentage of people with dark features, owing to Moorish blood, makes some such means of secret recognition a necessity.

Often before coming to the spring we would stop at a little ventorillo, and mix a delicious sangría, which we would carry with us in a beautiful old blue and white pitcher. At other times we would wander through the Gypsy quarter. Walking along the Sacro Monte heights one afternoon, we heard the clink-a-clink clink of an anvil, and turning a bend in the path, we came upon the weird figure of a Gypsy blacksmith standing beside his forge in a cave irregularly hollowed from the rock. He might have been singing the song, *Las Muchis*, transcribed by Borrow:

### THE SPARKS

“More than a hundred lovely daughters  
I see produced at one time, fiery as roses:  
in one moment they expire gracefully circum-  
volving.”

With one hand he plied a pair of bellows, that puffed and blew a jet of orange and violet flame against the piece of glowing metal which he held in some pincers in the other. His monstrous

shadow flickered fantastically on the sooty walls. He stopped his work to greet us, and show us some large, rough nails that he was forging by hand.

Farther down the path we came on a Gitano who was clipping a borrico. Some years before, as Perico told me, he had killed his wife with the pair of sharp shears. She had been unfaithful; and he had executed her, according to a primitive custom. The police had never known of it; and the Gypsies had never told.

It is not often, however, that Gypsy murderers go unpunished, especially if the victim is a Gentile. Awaiting trial and certain execution were two Gitanas in the Granada jail at that very moment. One of them was a young girl, and very pretty.

The father had been arrested by a pair of Guardias Civiles. Fear and hatred of the police among the *Calé* is easily understandable. The breaking up of a family is a much more serious thing to Gypsies than to Gentiles, while ignorance of the intricacies of the law gives rise to a sort of superstitious dread. Furthermore, the Gypsies as a whole are frequently regarded as outlaws, having no right to protection, and have been fearfully abused by the very guardians of public safety. From the son of a Guardia Civil in Seville I heard of several cases where Guardias had arrested Gypsy girls on a pretext, and then

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taken advantage of them while handcuffed and helpless.

In this case the wife and daughter had followed the Gitano and the officers along a road in the Alpujarras, weeping and lamenting. Their one thought was to free him. It did not matter how. They had no weapons; but with stones they attacked the well-armed police—and to their own horror—they found they had killed them. In their frenzied desire to cover up a clue to the crime, a mad idea occurred to them: to render the Guardias unrecognizable. Their ghastly attempt at completely mutilating the faces of the policemen only served to alienate all sympathy from the Gypsies. They were soon captured, and certain to be hanged.

Sitting alone in a dark cell, apart from the father whom she loved so desperately, was the young girl, surrounded by grim visions, each more horrible than the other: the gallows, that stared at her from the future, and the gruesome, featureless heads of the unhappy victims, that stared from out the past.

Returning on foot from an excursion into the wildest part of the Sierra Nevada, and an ascent of Mulhacen, the highest mountain in Spain, it was refreshing to reach the hotel where I could have a warm bath and a siesta, after two nights without sleep. When I awoke it was nine o'clock at night. The next day I was leaving for

## NIGHTS AND DAYS ON THE GYPSY TRAIL

Guádix. It was my last chance to see the Gypsies of Granada. As soon as I had finished dinner, I set out for the Camino del Sacro Monte.

Aside from fortune telling, begging, and basket making, most of the Gitanos in the quarter make their living by dancing; and those who are not professionals are at least experts. As it was too late for them to make any money from tourists that night, I suggested that we have a dance among ourselves. After I had sent a boy to the venta for a generous supply of wine, they agreed that it would be a good way to spend the time. Manolo Amayo, the son of the former "Capitán," went for his guitar and tambourine, and sent for another guitarrista. Mariquita, the prettiest of the dancers, a girl of sixteen or seventeen, coquettishly put a spray from a fir tree in her hair as a headdress. It was to be a gala affair.

Of all the dancing that I saw in Spain, the baile that night was the most remarkable, the most graceful, and the wildest. The guitar player struck a succession of stirring chords; then, as his fingers flashed along the stops, the instrument gave out a series of runs and arpeggios of extraordinary virtuosity. If you have never heard an Andalusian Gypsy play the guitar, you cannot imagine the musical possibilities of the instrument. It must have been such playing as I heard on this occasion that induced Paganini to write the numerous compositions in



*Photo by Austin A. Breed*

*Most of the Gypsies in the Quarter  
Make Their Living by Dancing*





## IN THE SHADOW OF THE JAIL

which the guitar carries the theme as well as accompanies the violin. There was something of a display of fireworks about it, but the fireworks of a battlefield, for it roused the feelings as no mere tour de force could have done. It was virtuosity à la Paganini—electrifying.

At my request they danced the oldest and strangest dances. Some of the Gypsies had been in Melilla, and had learned an Arab dance; but they gave it with more animation than the one I had seen in Morocco. They danced the Zacatín, the name of which recalls the Moorish occupation of Granada; also the Tango de la Flor, the Meringaso, the Abulea, the Achuchón, and many other dances which almost never appear on the programs of professional dancers of the stage.

Meanwhile the wine circulated in a single bowl, from which each drank in turn. It held an ample measure, could quickly be refilled, and like the ceremonial loving-cup, it symbolized the bond of union among us all. Restraint was tossed to the winds. "We're all Gypsies here!" someone shouted. "¡El ful de los *Calé* pa' los *Bu'né*!"

"I'm the Captain of the Dance!" cried Manolo Amayo, the son of the unlucky murderer, for whom he was still wearing black.

"The Captain of the Thieves, you mean," another replied.

No outsiders to spoil the fun! Each and all clapped their hands, or rattled their heels against

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the stone floor in time to the music. A huge tambourine, minus the parchment, was given me to jingle with the rhythm. The cave was in an uproar, and everyone was at the height of joy.

The dances of the Achuchón, and the Mosca recalled the primitive worship of sex, the great creative life-force. As they danced, the Gypsies were no more depraved than nature itself; unconscious of any guilt in their actions as the scarlet flowers of the cactus. It was a sort of barbaric religious rite, like the Dionysian revels of the Maenades. No doubt there was something of the sacred dances of India in those I saw that night, dances brought from the country of their origin, and preserved, with modifications, throughout their age-long travels. Once in America I saw a Welsh Gypsy give a similar performance, and frequently I have seen both Serbian and Russian Romanies dance in the same manner. But the Achuchón and the Mosca are older than Greece, older than ancient India and its cults in prehistoric cave temples; they are as old as man.

Finally a mock marriage was enacted by two girls, so that I might see the dances that accompany the ceremony. The principal feature of it was the throwing of imaginary bonbons at the couple as they danced. Had it been a real wedding, the floor of the cave would have been strewn with a sticky mass of candy.

## IN THE SHADOW OF THE JAIL

After midnight it was suggested that we break up the juerga. Knowing that the dancers would be hungry—as well as thirsty—after their exertions, I invited them to have something to eat. On the road leading into the ravine that separates the hill of the Alhambra from that of the Generalife, there is a ventorillo which I knew would still be open. Thither we all went.

A strong wind was blowing, cooling the brow and stirring the blood, as we emerged from the cave. The path lay along the cliff, like the cornice of a huge cathedral. The moon was shining. It flooded the tossing greenery in Paradise Vale, lighted the whitewashed fronts of the Gypsy caves, and cast long shadows from the tall stone crosses along the way. These crosses, which seem so out of place in the Quarter of the Gitanos, were erected in 1595, relics of the tremendous religious exaltation which swept Granada at the time of the supposed finding of the relics of San Celio and other martyrs. The exaltation reached such a pitch of madness that it had to be checked by the ecclesiastical authorities themselves. It was curious to see the Gitanos as they passed these symbols, still dancing, exalted by an equal, but completely pagan frenzy.

They sang and shouted. On the edge of the corniced path a group halted for a moment around a bailadora who seemed animated by the

## NIGHTS AND DAYS ON THE GYPSY TRAIL

very forces of nature. Like the tree tops in the valley below, bending and quivering in the wind, she swayed and surged with arms outstretched as though to touch the stars.

In the ventorillo we were given a large room by ourselves. Food and wine were brought, and after a brief rest the dancing continued. Now that I had seen them rollicking a second time in the open, I understood the power and charm of the genuine baile flamenco. It must have originated out of doors, and have come from a necessity within, from joy in the rhythm of life. No wonder the Gypsies are not at their best when merely dancing for spectators.

First one then another danced with all his strength and passion. A girl of nine or ten, after slipping to the floor exhausted, continued the movements of the dance—the inner urge and the fiery spirit still unquenched. Nor were they less prodigal of their actions and emotions when merely watching. They were all impelled simultaneously by the same feelings as the dancer; they threw back their heads, or bit their knuckles in an inarticulate effort to express their fierce ecstasy. The graceful creatures were like palm trees in a tropical hurricane.

Such intensity of passionate joy cannot last forever. The dance ended, and we all filed out into the night. It would soon be dawn. Above us in the darkness rose the towers and ramparts





*Photo by Austin A. Breed*

*Gypsy Dancers of Granada.  
Full of Subtle Grace to the Tips  
of Their Fingers*



## IN THE SHADOW OF THE JAIL

of the Alhambra, where, a hundred years before, Washington Irving had sat and listened with delight to the sound of the guitar, the singing, and the shouts of merriment floating up from below. Most of the Gypsies returned to their caves; but a few who were still too stirred to think of sleep, accompanied me to my hotel, where they said good-bye.

## Chapter XI

### *Fantastic Guádix*

#### THE SMITH'S TALE

**T**HE city of Guádix is seldom visited by tourists, although it contains one of the most fantastic quarters I have ever seen. The name Guádix comes from the Arabic, Wâdi-Ash, the Valley of Life, though to-day a more appropriate designation for this wild, desolate region would be the Valley of Death.

As I climbed the sloping streets toward the Moorish citadel, I came to a ridge overlooking a series of gullies and bare red hills, which suggest a sea of blood suddenly whipped to fury by a storm, then petrified in giant waves. As a bit of landscape the region is extraordinary in itself; but what makes it still more fantastic is the fact that every hill and gully is burrowed with caves, the homes of thousands of Gypsies and Gentiles. Some of the caves are very old, and are uninhabited, mere lairs; others have the front part of a house, with a brief tile roof, a door and windows, the rest being buried in the rock. Nearly all have chimneys protruding from the soil. It was as though a miniature mountain

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range and a lot of caves and houses had been shaken up and allowed to fall pell-mell.

It seems the creation of some outlandish deity in a moment of madness. Even the views of the surrounding country are unexpected—irrational. In one direction, above the parched, barren hills, tower the snowy Sierras. As one turns in another direction, the distant horizon line is as level as the sea. It seems as though the entire picture must be a dream, or some lunar landscape on the dead planet.

Even more curious than the region itself are its inhabitants, the dregs and wreckage of various races: Spanish, Moorish, and Gypsy. The cave-dwellers form a separate world, ignored by the rest of Guádix, a barbaric and chaotic world, where primeval passions run high, and men seem more akin to animals than to other human beings.

Descending into one of the ravines, I came across a band of Gypsies that had recently arrived. They were encamped without even a tent to shelter them. A few of their scanty belongings had been placed in an abandoned cave. They made me welcome to their gully on hearing that I was a Romani; and invited me to share their meager food. I asked them if they spoke Gypsy. The leader looked at me sadly for a moment, then replied with a smile: "We know nothing—except how to eat!" He went on to



lament the decay of *Caló* in Spain, saying: "It is our own fault. We have taught it to the Gentiles, and now it is of little use to us. We have nothing left, not even our language."

They could not direct me to the caves of other Gypsies; but I was not long in finding them. One whom I met told me that his name was "Bobo Gitano, Fool Gypsy." As he was carrying the long whip used by *chalanés*, I asked him if he were a horse trader. "Yes," he replied.

"How many horses have you?"

"I haven't any; but I've got a little burro."

Another Gypsy whom I met told me his name was Roca, Rock. Nearly every man of the lower classes has a nickname, by which he is commonly known to his friends. Rock had not heard his real name, or his last name for so long that he had forgotten it; and his daughter was obliged to call herself *María la de Roca*, Rock's Mary.

He was as wild a looking member of the human species as I have seen in years. His clothes were in rags; and his black, weather-beaten skin was visible to the waist. The sight of a stranger talking to Roca gathered a crowd of Gentile boys, who began to make fun of him. The decaying carcass of a dog lay beside the path near us. One of them pointed to it, shouting, "There's a dead pig! Aren't you hungry?" They referred to the traditional belief that Gypsies will eat swine that have died a natural death.

This and other insults so stirred him that he made a dash at the boys, but they eluded him.

Soon they were joined by older men; and a crowd of Gypsies and *Bu'né* quickly formed. It was evident that feeling between the two races was intensely bitter. A general fight was nearly started when one of the Gentiles called a Gitana a name casting doubt on her honor. Spreading her half-clenched fingers like the claws of a hawk, she swooped down on the insulter crying: "By my *mulé*! By my dead! I'll kill you!" Before she could lay hands on him, cooler heads among the Gypsies had seized her by the shoulders; and friends of the Gentile were hurrying him away to prevent a pitched battle in which all of us would be involved. With arms still raised she shouted after the retreating enemy: "I'll kill you! I'll kill you!" Each word was like a knife thrust.

When the crowd broke up, I returned to my hotel. That evening after dinner a traveling-man who sat next to me at the table d'hôte suggested that we go to the theater together. First we had coffee on the terrace of a café on the principal square. As we sat there in the dusk, numerous figures with dark features and piercing eyes passed us. I was sure that they were Romanies, but I did not speak to them, as I was with a Gentile. After buying tickets for the performance, I sat and watched it for a while;

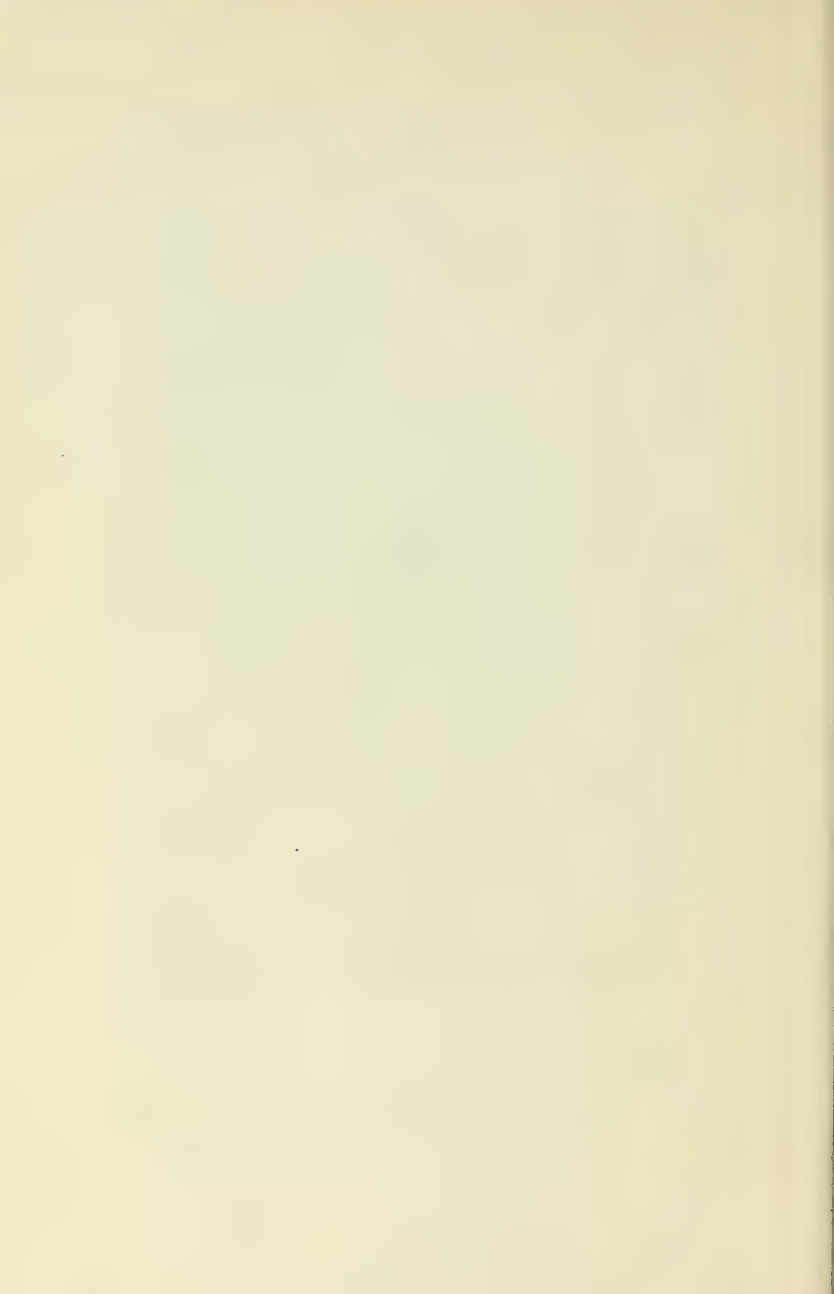
but my mind was elsewhere. How tame and insipid were the acting and the tawdry stage settings after the scenes of that day. I made an excuse to the traveling-man, and slipped away.

Half afraid to enter the cave district after dusk, yet drawn to it with an overwhelming fascination, I started for the Cañada de los Gitanos, Gypsy Gully. A pathway took me up a steep slope to a high, barren ridge traversed by a sort of pass, so narrow that one could touch the rock on either side. From there one could see a large part of the entire region. Looking back I caught a glimpse of the full moon rising from the distant hills, a crimson disk barred with black, where low clouds hung along the horizon. Something sinister, uncanny about that great red orb made me shudder. Its faint light shone on the jagged crests in front of me, but the intervening gullies were gulfs of darkness which the eye could not sound.

When I reached the bottom of the dim chasm, I saw an occasional light issuing from the doorways of the caves. I hurried past, uncertain as to whether or not the owners were friendly Gypsies, or hostile Gentiles. The clink of an anvil and the glow of a forge guided me to the cave of a Gitano whom I had met that afternoon. All day he had lolled and slept in the shade without working; and now he was busy forging a broken chain which was needed in the morning. I en-



*"Fool Gypsy"—The Chalán*





tered the low door, and found myself in a grotto shaped like a bottle, or a vast chimney, the soot-covered walls of which rose indefinitely into the solid rock, and were lost from sight in the darkness overhead.

The smith was surprised to see me. He seemed glad of the interruption, however, and led me out of the witches' kitchen where he was working, to the cave where he lived. He lighted a wick floating in a tiny basin of oil. It dimly shone on the inner recesses of the cavern, where a number of half-clothed human forms lay prostrate.

We talked of the different Gypsy residents of the Quarter, and of the many wandering Gitanos who made it a halting place. Colonies of cave-dwellers—usually Gypsies—are common in all parts of Spain, but this is the largest. "Perhaps you heard of this place when Chato Doble was trapped here," he remarked. I told him that I had never heard of Chato Doble. "I thought everyone in Spain had heard of him. It was all in the papers some years ago—but maybe like me, you can't read."

He told me the story, as we sat in the doorway looking out on that strange region, that jagged, shapeless world, looming about us in the livid moonlight. A hell that has turned to stone, burned out and silent. It was a story of Gypsy revenge, a tragedy so stark and grim, so unusual that I would scarcely have believed it, if the

details had not been confirmed by a reporter who had been sent by his paper to cover the case in Valladolid, and who retold the tale to a group of us, sitting up in a compartment, on an all-night journey to Barcelona. Not one of the travelers closed his eyes that night.

Chato Doble was famous among the Gypsies in all parts of Spain for his agility and strength, for his stealth and bold resolution. His nickname "Chato Doble" had been given him so long ago in his youth, that the origin had been forgotten. Still, it seemed to fit him perfectly. In contrast to the aquiline features of most Gitanos he was "chato," flat nosed; and he was certainly "double." It was as though two men had been welded into one.

He was short and stout. In a wrestling match or a scuffle his opponent was sure to be deceived by his appearance. It seemed impossible that a man with his bull-dog build could have his cat-like quickness, and his eel-like ability to wriggle out of a hold. In his mental traits there was the same duality. Unlike most Gypsies, who only face the enemy when cornered, he was fearless and aggressive. He could never swallow an insult with a smile of false humility, and wait his time for revenge. He loved a fight for its own sake. On the other hand he was crafty and tricky—especially in horse trading.

He delighted in it, as a game. And many

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were the stories told about his slyness in "trading:" how he would put quicksilver in the ears of old nags to make them sprightly, or steal a mule and disguise it so perfectly by clippers and dyes that he would be able to sell it back to the owner. Such was his reputation for cunning, that every exploit in this field was always attributed to him.

Another trait was his magnetism: powerful as his steel physique, and subtle as his guile. He made friends easily; and dominated those with whom he came in contact. By sheer energy of will he seemed to master the animals he was selling; and by a similar force of concentration he hypnotized the buyers into buying. He was far from good-looking; but such was the power of his gaze, that women were fascinated.

It was this which proved his own undoing, when later he became an outlaw. His gift of attracting the fair sex led to his being attracted in turn. As a Gypsy in Canada once said to me: "There's lots of criminals that's clever enough not to get *lald opré*, arrested, for a few years; but sooner or later they does, 'cause they always has some weakness—and generally it's a girl."

The first time Chato Doble came to the notice of the public was some twenty years ago in Valladolid. With his brother, Diego, his pretty niece, Dolores, and some other Gypsies, he was

## NIGHTS AND DAYS ON THE GYPSY TRAIL

drinking in a venta. A quarrel started, over some words that passed between Chato Doble and Dolores. Later it was impossible to find out for certain what it was about. One of those typical Romani rows, which reaches a terrible pitch of sound and fury, and ends in an embrace. At any rate, such would have doubtless been the end, if a passing policeman had not intervened.

Hearing the disturbance, the unhappy municipio entered the venta and called on the participants to stop. Interference was resented. Gypsies prefer to settle their own differences, and shun all contact with the police. With a common accord they turned their fury on the Gentile. The first to confront him was Chato Doble, his teeth clenched with rage. The officer reached to draw his saber; but he was too slow. Seeing his movement the agile Gypsy leaped at his throat.

The municipio was found dead. The murderer was known. But such was his skill in eluding his pursuers, that it was only by chance that he ever came to be arrested.

Some years later, with a companion, he was driving a herd of horses along the upland plain of Alava, in the Basque country. On either side lay smiling fields of level green, hedged in by barren saw-toothed ridges of the mountains, which rise bleak and menacing in every province

## FANTASTIC GUÁDIX

of Spain. The horses had been obtained from a man who had stolen them. For that reason they had no papers, such as are required in the Peninsula when a horse is sold, just as deeds are necessary when real estate is transferred.

At a bend in the road, they passed a pair of Guardias Civiles. The latter had descriptions of the stolen horses, which seemed to fit. Afraid to take any chances, however, they let the Gypsies pass; then wheeling about with leveled rifles, they called on them to halt and produce the papers showing ownership. Chato Doble was trapped. By a mere accident he had fallen into the hands of the law. He knew the reputation for unerring marksmanship of the Guardias, who correspond in many ways to the Mounted Police of Canada. Staring into the muzzle of a gun held by one of these men, there was nothing to do but submit. He allowed himself to be handcuffed. Time perhaps would bring a better chance to try and bolt for freedom.

The Gypsies were taken to the jail at Vitoria, where they were to be held until they could make good their claim to the horses. The situation of Chato Doble was desperate. It was only a question of time before he would be recognized as the slayer of the municipio in Valladolid. Immediately he sent a message to his brother, which was supposedly a request to come and clear his title to the horses, but in reality was merely to



## NIGHTS AND DAYS ON THE GYPSY TRAIL

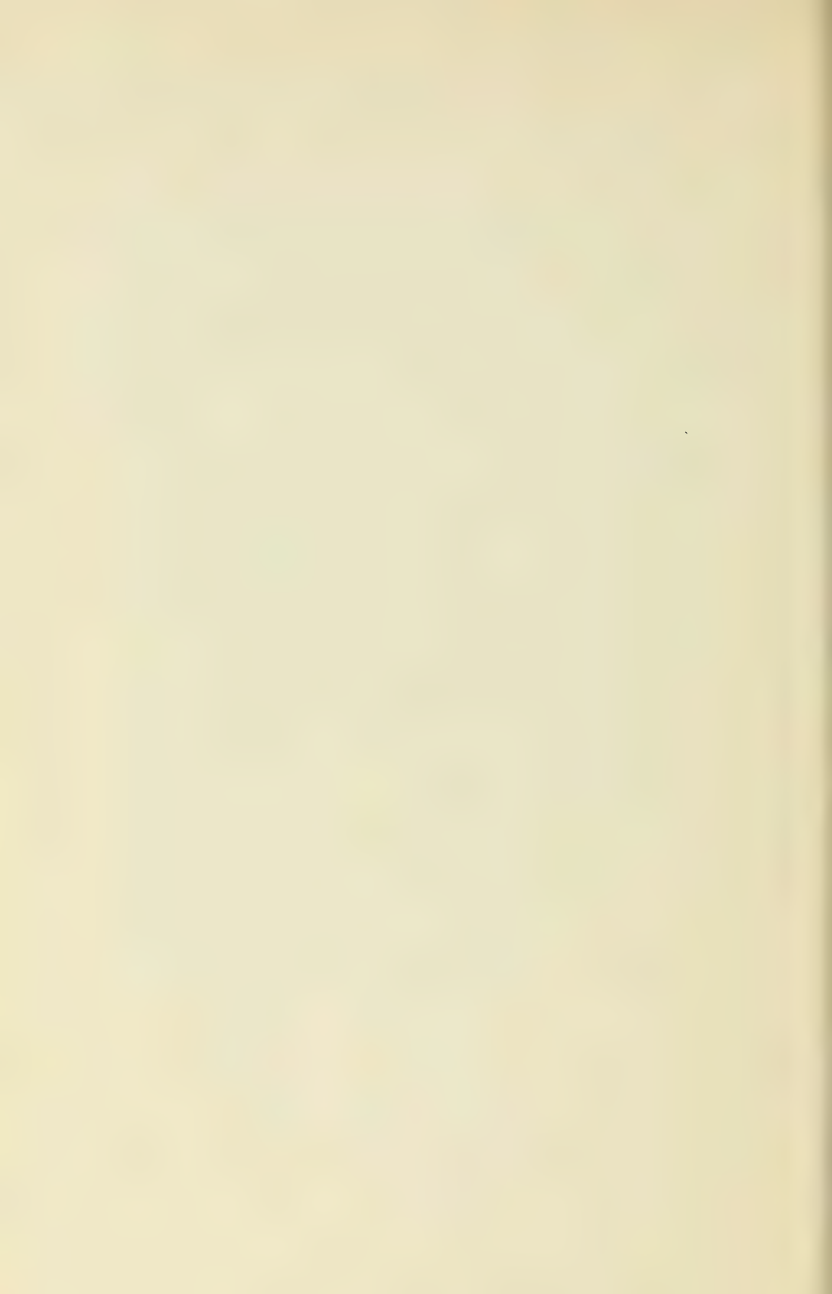
inform him of his plight, in order that he might devise some means of rescue.

A few days later, a small band of Gitanos came to Vitoria selling baskets and flowers. They camped on the edge of the town; and every day the women and girls passed through the streets, calling their wares, or stopping from house to house to exhibit them. The second morning, they knocked at the home of the jailer, which was in the same building as the jail. The preceding day, the jailer's wife had gone to the window, at the sound of their musical voices; and had been attracted by the pretty bouquets. Confined to that grim building, like a prisoner herself, she was gladdened by the sight of the flowers, which brought to her mind the green fields and open country. She asked the Gypsies to come in.

One of the girls, who was about sixteen, and whom they called Dolores, was unusually captivating. She had all the vivacity and spontaneity of the child; while the alert, intelligent look in her large gazelle-like eyes was one of understanding far beyond her years. Learning that the jailer's wife was from the province of Valencia, she danced in the courtyard a rapid, graceful Jota Valenciana, which recalled to the older woman a sudden sense of lost joy and the happier days of her youth. Others beside the keepers of the prison were deeply moved by the scene. From



*Roca*



## FANTASTIC GUÁDIX

behind stout bars of iron a pair of Gypsy eyes were following the dancer with longing gaze.

The next day Dolores brought a tiny basket she had woven herself for the jailer's little daughter. The child was delighted. It was just the right size for her doll. The Gitana also offered to tell fortunes. Charmed by her beauty, the jailer held out his coarse hand to have the maze of lines deciphered. She took it; and immediately exclaimed in a tone of horror that could not have been feigned: "A terrible calamity is threatening some one in this house!" The sincerity of her voice startled the man and his wife with a sudden wave of fear.

"A calamity?" they questioned, drawing instinctively together.

"Yes!" she solemnly replied; but her thoughts were on the Gypsy near by in the cell.

Both Gentiles would have protested that they did not believe in prophecies and charms; but being ignorant and superstitious they were greatly relieved when Dolores asserted impressively that she knew a way of warding off the evil. Making certain cabalistic signs, she repeated a few words in the "black tongue."

In the course of his life as a jailer the man had picked up some *Caló'e čoripé*, or thieves' Gypsy; but the only one in the incantation which he understood was *Undebel*, God. It sounded Christian and reassuring. Perhaps if he had

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understood it all, he would have been less at ease. As it was, they felt further indebted to the Gypsy girl for her occult protection.

The red dawn was lifting behind the mountain walls, when the Gitanas returned to the camp with arms full of flowers. They sat down in the tent of Diego, the father of Dolores, to arrange them. The tuberose blossoms were fastened on little sticks to hold them firm. The others were sorted with a keen eye for color, and bound together in bunches with strong fibers of esparto grass. "In these two we'll put the knives," said Diego.

"*Bato*, father!" pleaded Dolores. "Let us put files instead."

"It is too late! Your uncle might be recognized." Reluctantly her cunning hands bound up the sharp, slender blades in the midst of some carnations.

As the Gitanas passed down the street where the jail is located, the jailer's wife heard them, and came out to buy a small bouquet. She regretted that they did not stop, and was glad to see them when they returned that afternoon. "Here are some flowers that we could not sell," said Dolores. "They are a little wilted; but it is a shame to throw them away. May we give them to the prisoners?" Thinking how much flowers meant to herself in those grim surroundings, the woman granted her request. Chato



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Doble and his companion had heard the sound of the Gypsy voices, and came to the grating that overlooked the courtyard. To them were given the bunches of carnations. Not the slightest sign of recognition was apparent on the faces of any of the Gitanos. The remaining flowers were handed through the bars to other prisoners.

That afternoon the Gypsies broke camp. Dolores and her father started south. The others scattered in different directions.

Darkness had settled down on the prison. The jailer and his vigilante were going the rounds of the barred corridors. All was still. They halted for a moment close to the grating, faintly outlined against a window, when suddenly out of the blackness two knives descended. Their throats cut, they sank to the floor without a cry. The powerful arm of Chato Doble dragged the body of the warden within reach, groped for the keys, and found them. He unlocked the door of the common cell in which he had been confined with other prisoners; and, coolly walking down the corridor, remarked to his companion as he unlocked the door of each cell: "We must keep the Guardias Civiles busy these next few days." A moment later he disappeared in the night. Prisoners sleep lightly. The rest soon awakened. Dazed with surprise and fear, they tiptoed shivering into the street.

It was not until a few days later that the

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authorities became aware that they had held in their power the man who had killed the municipio in Valladolid. Nor were they certain at first as to which of the prisoners had murdered the jailers. As soon as the crime was discovered, the neighboring country was encircled by a cordon of Guardias Civiles. One by one the escaped criminals were caught and questioned—all except the Gypsies.

It is less than a hundred miles from Vitoria to the French border; and it was correctly supposed that Chato Doble had gone in that direction. Had he been an ordinary criminal it would have been a simple matter to have captured him. But he was far from being that. He knew each forest, ravine, and pass in that wild, mountainous region. His strength and agility were such that he could outdistance horse or man in the rocky river beds and barrancos that serve as rough trails. He also knew that the officers of the law could count on scant assistance from the Basques, through whose country he was fleeing; for many of the latter are smugglers, and the people as a whole are suspicious of the police. They jealously guard their local rights, and resent all intrusions of the central authorities.

Had Chato Doble been alone, or had he separated from his companion at once, he would have had little to fear. But he refused to leave

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his Gypsy comrade to his own resources. He encouraged him to continue when half dead with fatigue; and almost pulled him up the steep crags to the high-level pass near the summit of Mt. Ahaddi, where they could look down into France, a kilometer distant. It was not until then that they parted.

For two months Chato Doble roamed through Southern France. It was his plan to leave the frontier far behind; but for some unknown reason he could not. Each time he started northward he found himself returning to some point on the great level plain from which he could see the distant Pyrenees, where Spain lay. They rose like a mighty wall, broken only by the proud, slender Pic du Midi, or the virginal snow fields of the Vignemale glistening in the sunlight. His longing for the sight of the country he had left became a fixed idea with him.

It was all part of a deeper obsession. Night after night his dreams were haunted by the graceful figure and lovely features of his niece, Dolores. He would see her dancing, as she had danced that day in the prison courtyard. Or he would have a vision of himself with a noose about his neck, and his hands tied behind his back. Suddenly Dolores would appear and cut the bonds. Once he dreamed that he was dancing the marriage dance—with her. Friends were pelting them with candies that turned to dag-

## NIGHTS AND DAYS ON THE GYPSY TRAIL

gers; and he would awake in the night, alone, his cheeks moist with tears.

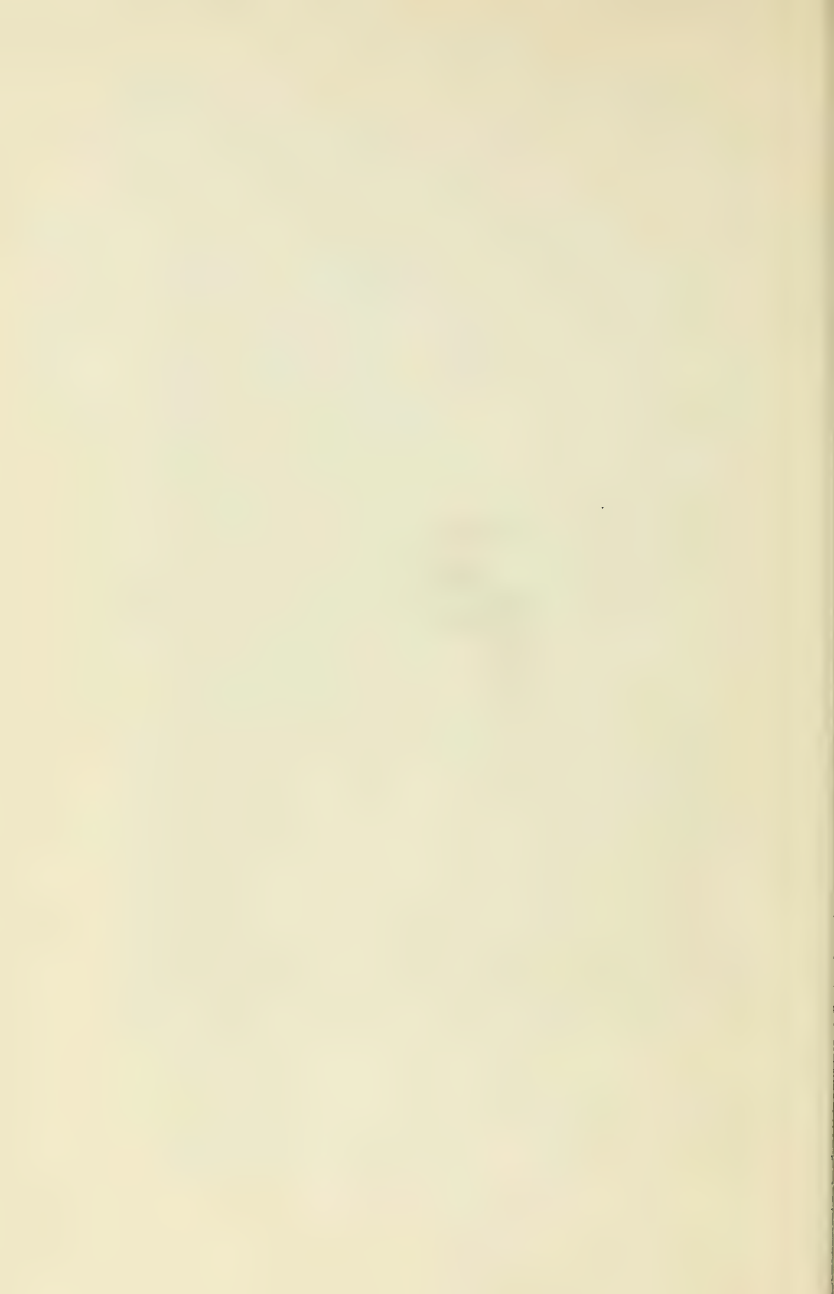
For three years he had loved her without daring to admit it even to himself. She had seemed to shun him; and he, too, had avoided her, saying that she was heartless and conceited; and that he doubted her loyalty. Owing to the nearness of the kinship, marriage was impossible. And he had done his best to thrust her out of his mind. Then had come the rescue in the jail at Vitoria. In the days that followed, he had gradually persuaded himself, in the hidden depths of his mind, that she had saved him less out of the promptings of family duty than of a warmer and more personal feeling. As hope grew, he became conscious of his love for her.

In spite of the danger of arrest, he returned to the border. For some time, however, he wandered in the High Pyrenees, hesitating to cross the boundary line; not because he knew that the police were still searching for him—he could take care of that—but because of the struggle within. The tremendous precipices of the Cirques of Gavarnie and Troumousse towering thousands of feet above, seemed to encircle him like the walls of his own conscience. He had murdered two men, but in a rage or out of necessity—two Gentiles. He felt no more guilty than a soldier who bayonets an enemy in battle. But to yield to guilty love for his niece would make him a



*The Pass. The Object Protruding  
from the Rock Is the Chimney  
of a Cave*





criminal in his own eyes. He would be beyond the pale of Gypsy law.

At last he gave in to his longings, and scaled the heights into Spain. Everywhere the officers of the law were on the look-out for him; but he managed to elude them. With some difficulty he succeeded in finding his brother and Dolores, who were hiding in Estremadura. Diego was delighted to see him, but fearful for his safety.

As for his niece, she yielded to an impulse of joy on meeting him; but immediately after, she treated him with coolness, as before. Like Chato Doble she had struggled subconsciously against love. And to her, likewise, the incidents of the imprisonment and escape had been a sudden illumination, a flash of lightning in the darkness of her soul. Even more than most Gypsies, she was averse to cold-blooded violence and bloodshed. Her Romani sense of unbounded duty to her father and of loyalty to the tribe would not have induced her to aid in a murder, had she not felt a stronger bond of attachment to her uncle. But what had made her realize the truth, even more clearly, was the fact that once the murder was committed she was more concerned over Chato Doble's safety than her own, or that of her father, whom she loved devotedly.

In time the hue and cry ceased. The police practically gave up the search as hopeless. The

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Gypsies were able to resume their wandering life with others of their race. But Chato Doble and Dolores were not happy. The pleasure of being together—now that they were aware of their love—only heightened their resistance to each other, and stung them to despair.

One day they were encamped in a small, fertile plain in a valley of the Province of Murcia. It was after a terrible flood, an “avenida” caused by the sudden melting of great snow banks in the Sierras, under the warm breath of an African wind. Evidence of the damage was to be seen on every hand. Ugly patches of red clay, brought down from above, covered the rich soil. Flowering branches of the orange trees were broken off, or fouled with rags of dead grass.

In many a house there was mourning; but the band of Gypsies, who had not shared in the loss, were in a gay mood, and were holding a *juerga* in a roadside tavern. Each one was called on in turn to sing a *copla*. Chato Doble sang a *solea* in which the effect of absence on love was compared to that of wind on fire: the little flame is extinguished; but a huge conflagration is made to burn more fiercely. As he sang, his eyes were drawn irresistibly to those of Dolores, to watch its effect on her.

She did not applaud like the others; but sat with a far-away stare. When it was her turn, she sang a *serrana* with a peculiar exaltation:

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"El querer que se oculta,  
Bajo el silencio,  
Hace mayor estrago  
Dentro del pecho.  
Porque sus llamas,  
Como no hallan salida—  
¡Queman el alma!

"The love one dares not tell,  
Lies unexpressed,  
And makes a living hell  
Within the breast.  
Finding no goal,  
The fierce flames cannot rest—  
And burn the soul!"

A little later Dolores left the juerga, saying that the wine had gone to her head, and that she was going to get some fresh air. Chato Doble slipped out a moment after, and overtook her in a path through an orange grove. Through the white petals of the blossoms shone the moon. The air was fragrant with the overpowering sweetness of thousands of flowers in the branches all about them.

"I want to be alone!" she pleaded. But the look in her eyes belied her words. His arms were about her. She struggled less with him than with herself. If only she hated him. In her anguish she cried aloud.

Diego, puzzled by the strange looks and the sudden disappearance of his brother and daughter, left the others. He heard the cry and rushed to the scene, shouting, "Dolores! Dolores!"

Horried at his own actions, Chato Doble fled. In Diego's eyes this alone was an admission of guilt. Half-crazed, the father ran through the night, swearing to kill. The form fleeing in the darkness ahead of him disappeared; but he ran on, until finally he fell with exhaustion. For a long time, he lay on the ground sobbing.

To think that his own brother, a Gypsy, should have committed the one unpardonable crime against his own family, the crime that could only be washed away in blood! At dawn Diego set out in pursuit, determined to follow Chato Doble's trail until he should find him.

Spain is a network of mountain chains well adapted for hiding. Diego knew that he would have no easy task in hunting down the wily fox. However, he knew the secret ways, the hidden caves, and sources of information closed to the police. This time Chato Doble was being tracked by a man who was his match.

The trail led through every province of the Peninsula, circling and doubling. Sometimes he would be only a few hours behind his quarry, and then again he would be delayed for weeks, not knowing which way to follow. But he never failed to find a clue, whether in the remote Sieras, or in the maze of streets in Barcelona or Madrid.

Once in Málaga he was completely baffled, until a chance remark by a fisherman in a wine-



shop revealed that his brother had fled to Morocco. There he followed him. The strange language, the savage tribes, and lack of knowledge of those wilds made pursuit extremely arduous. Still, such difficulties were easy for a Gypsy to overcome, and were as great for the pursued as for the pursuer. Once he even caught sight of him in the crowded market place of Tangier, wearing a hooded burnous like the natives. But the crowd of men and beasts was so dense, and the white-robed figures so much alike that he immediately lost him.

Diego learned that he took the steamer that morning for Cadiz. There would not be another for two days. But no matter; the trail was warm. On reaching Cadiz he dogged his brother's steps to the lofty five-peaked Cerro de San Cristóbal; thence to the Sierra de Ronda, the Sierra Nevada, and at last to Guádix.

Hitherto Chato Doble had avoided Gypsies, for he knew that they would sympathize with Diego, and that among them he would be an outlaw. There is no exile so cruel as exile in the midst of one's own people, nor greater hardship for a Romani than separation from his race. Also it was rumored that Dolores was living in seclusion nearby.

It was dark when he had arrived, dead tired from long tramping in the wildest of the Sierras. Having found an abandoned cave on the crest

of a hill overlooking the Cañada de los Gitanos, he had wrapped himself in his manta, and soon fell asleep.

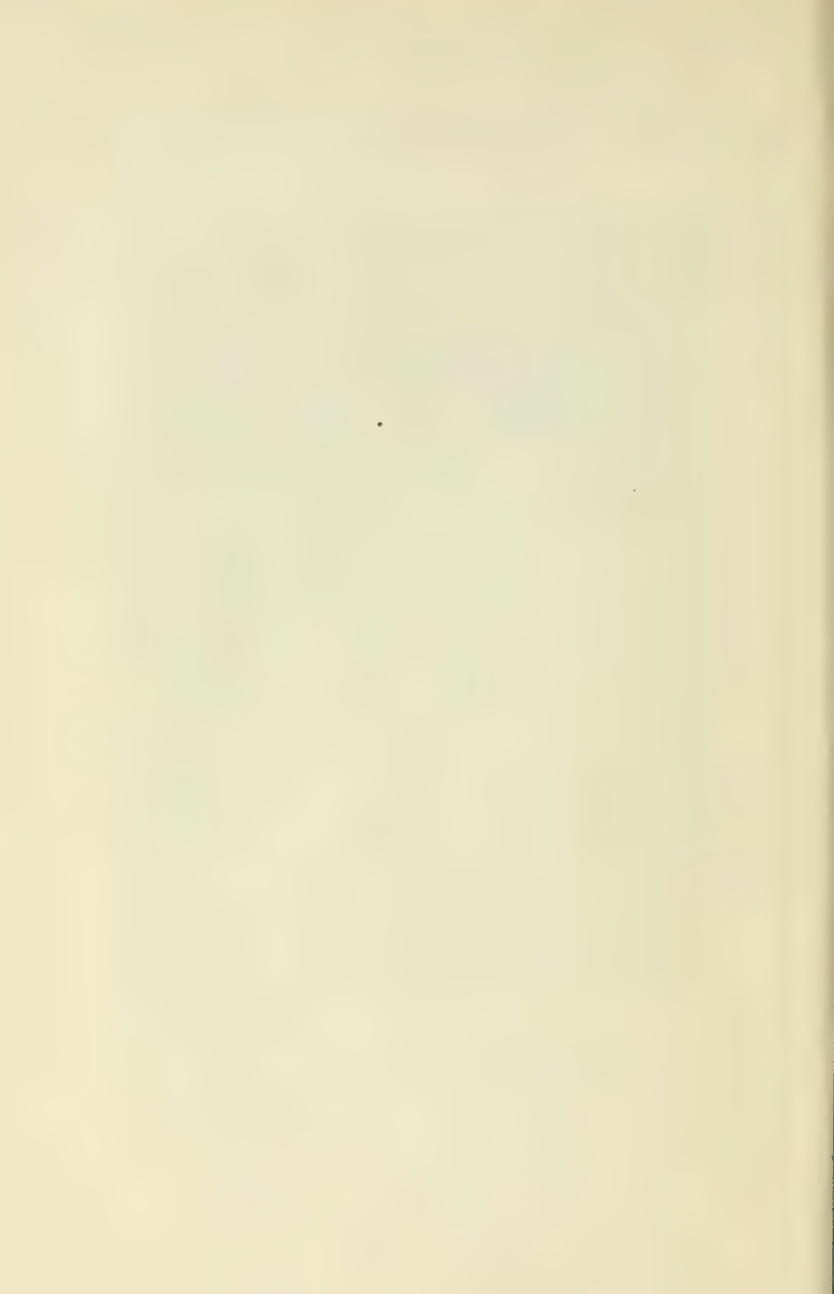
A few hours later Diego came. The news of his arrival soon spread. As he was sitting in an underground tavern in the district, drinking with some friends, another Gypsy entered and drew him aside. The man had seen Chato Doble, and knew where he was hiding. Together they cautiously approached the mouth of the cave.

There he lay asleep. "I've got him!" Diego muttered, taking out his knife. But his arm refused to stab. A wave of pity unnerved him. He thought of their childhood together; how as a little boy he had carried the younger brother in his arms. He walked away; but as he did so, his hatred and desire for vengeance revived. It would be too merciful to kill him as he slept. "There's another way!" he said.

Leaving his friend to watch, he started for Guádix. There he stopped at the barracks of the Guardias Civiles, and, without revealing his identity, told them he could guide them to the hiding place of Chato Doble. In doing this, Diego knew that he would alienate all sympathy on the part of his fellow Gypsies. Had he himself murdered Chato Doble, he would merely have done an act of justice, according to the code. But to turn him over to the police was treachery. What did he care? Nothing was too terrible



*Gypsies at the Mouth  
of a Cave*



## FANTASTIC GUÁDIX

for the betrayer. Chato Doble now would taste the bitter rage of the betrayed.

"It was a night like this," said the smith as he finished his tale. "And it was up there that the *xundanare* caught him." He pointed to the summit of a steep hill, scarcely visible. "Chato Doble knew that no one would come to his rescue this time. He fought like a wolf. But they got him. And a few months later he was hung."

"What became of Diego?" I asked.

"When the police had Chato Doble safely handcuffed they looked around for the man who had brought them to the cave. There was a big reward coming to him. But he was gone. Dolores was staying with an aunt near here. Diego showed up there at dawn, and took her away. We've never seen or heard of them since."

It was late. I said good-bye to the smith and started back toward the hotel. At the pass on the high barren ridge, I turned and looked back. Before me lay the hill which had been the murderer's last refuge, one of those great stone waves that give the strange region its mad, tempestuous appearance; one of those jagged crests rising from invisible depths and silhouetted against a mottled sky: the ruins of a world relapsing into primeval gulfs of darkness.



## Chapter XII

### *Gypsies in the Bull Ring*

JOSELITO

THE role which the Spanish Gypsies play as singers and dancers is well known, but that which they play as bull-fighters is less widely recognized, though quite remarkable. Joselito, or Gallito, the best matador of modern times, and of all times according to some critics, was the son of a bull-fighter and a Gypsy. His brilliant example did more than anything else to stimulate fresh interest in the art and set a higher standard for his colleagues, in spite of the fact that he was barely twenty-five when gored to death by a bull in the ring of Talavera, in 1920.

I shall never forget my first glimpse of Joselito. At the time I did not know that he was a Gypsy, but something in his looks aroused an intense curiosity. It was in Seville, at my first bull-fight, interesting because organized by the Macarena, the gay quarter of the populace, most typical in its love of the national spectacle, manzanilla wine, and the old songs and dances of Andalusia. It was Joselito's quarter. The corrida was interesting too because of the bulls,

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which came from the most celebrated stock in Spain, Miuras, so dangerous that the fighters demand double money for facing them.

The band was playing and the three matadors of the day with their respective cuadrillas, their troupes, were parading at the opening of the spectacle. Suddenly I noticed that everyone was rising and turning his gaze away from the ring, in the direction of two youths who had entered the upper box just above where I sat. One of them wore a bandage. I asked who they were. "Los Niños Sevillanos, Joselito and Limeño. That's Joselito, the one on the right."

I can still see the seventeen-year-old boy with his dark, attractive features, and peculiar smile, standing at the railing of the box, with the utmost poise as he bowed to the applauding crowd. His manner was that of a youthful Bonaparte, of some one destined to command. His gaze was clear and penetrating, with a certain reserve, as though smiling inwardly. It was indeed that of a Gypsy.

As we turned again to the gaily colored figures in their gold-embroidered costumes parading in the circle, I heard a spectator exclaim, "There are thirteen in the procession. Thirteen, and Miuras! God help the fighters!" His superstition amused me; but I soon saw that the fact that the bulls were Miuras, wild and treacherous creatures, gave good cause for concern.

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Tello, the matador facing the second bull, was grazed more than once by the furious beast. He was obviously nervous and unskilled; still, he returned each time to the attack with unquenched courage.

The third bull was a vicious-looking animal. The tip of one horn was splintered, but none the less to be feared. In placing the banderillas, barbed sticks wrapped in multicolored paper, one of the banderilleros was in imminent danger. A moment later the crowd held its breath again, as Rosales, the next matador, in making his first pass with the red cloth was caught squarely between the bull's horns. Luckily they passed on either side of him, and a sigh of relief went up from thousands of throats. Frightened and angered, he determined to dispatch the creature without delay. After only three more passes he turned sideways and stood motionless, aiming his uplifted sword. "¡No! ¡No! ¡No ahora! Not yet!" shouted the crowd, for the bull was not in a good position.

Unheeding, the matador lunged forward, burying the blade half way in the animal's neck. At the same time, the horns lifted. Rosales was gored in the breast. He fell to the ground, and the beast tried to gore him again.

Dashing forward to save him, Tello flung himself in the very face of the animal, and he too was caught by the ready horns and bowled to

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earth. Though badly wounded, Rosales sprang to his feet and threw himself on the brute again with his sword, killing it. An instant later he collapsed, and was carried to the hospital by his comrades amid applause for his show of grit. Meanwhile, Tello had risen to his feet unaided.

It was more than enough excitement for one day, but no sooner had the fourth bull entered the arena than our nerves, still tense, were strained to the breaking. The beast was the counterpart of the one that had just gored two matadors. As a rule a bull will not attack a man on horseback until it has been angered by the waving of capes and by the retreating figures of the peons, who run away from the bull in order to incite it. But the moment this animal spied the picador it charged him. Before he had time to swing his pike into position, the Miura plunged its horns into the horse's belly. With his pike planted firmly in the ground, the picador, a huge bull-like fellow, supported his wounded mount as though by sheer strength. Then toppling over lifeless, it pinned him to the ground an arm's length from the bull's deadly spikes. No one was near to divert the animal's attention. Instead of attacking the man, however, who was lying still, the bull ripped again and again at the prostrate horse. A livid entrail dangled from the beast's horns.

It was not until the fifth bull that the climax

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of thrills and horrors was finally reached. After a momentary breathing space it bounded into the ring, a brindled animal, black like its three predecessors. Tello advanced to meet it, spreading out his purple cape as he dropped on one knee. It is a difficult position, and the wide horns of the bull passed within a hair's breadth of his chest. Undaunted, he tried a veronica at the next charge, passing the cape from one hand to the other behind his back. The bull, following the movements of the purple cloth, was quicker than the man, and was close upon him. Luckily Tello escaped miraculously between the prongs, and was only bruised by the massive bull. At the following charge it succeeded in catching the hated cape, which the matador abandoned, narrowly saving himself behind the barrier.

After the picadors and banderilleros had played their respective roles, the bugle sounded for the third part of the spectacle. Stepping into the arena, Tello raised his hat in one hand and his sword in the other and dedicated the bull to Jose-lito. Then with a jaunty gesture he turned and threw his hat over his shoulder to his sword-boy.

His manner of approaching the beast and getting it into position showed utter recklessness and little skill. As he lunged with his sword the bull sprang forward and flung him high in the air. As he fell to the ground he was gored a second time, but arose and spread his arms to



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show the anxious crowd that his wounds were not vital. "Pure luck!" I heard some one exclaim.

Again the matador held out his red muleta and received the fierce rushes of the infuriated beast. Twice more he was grazed by the horns. The suspense was unendurable. The matador's clothes were in shreds, he was covered with blood, and apparently stunned by the various blows he had received. The only remaining matador, Dominguin, rushed forward to drag him out of the ring, but he would not leave. No less maddened than the bull, he rushed forward with his sword, and was gored again. But he did not lose his reckless courage, and kicked at the animal to show he was not afraid. Dominguin was at his side trying to wrench the sword from his hands. It was unnecessary. The beast that had fought with such ferocity, doubled its forelegs and slowly sank to the ground, while the crowd cheered, hysterical with relief, and Joselito threw a present to the wounded matador.

To us who were mere spectators the danger had been sufficiently nerve-racking—though purely vicarious. What of the seventeen-year-old boys in the box above, one of whom was still recovering from a goring?

There are legitimate criticisms to be made against bull-fighting, but to say, as people who have never entered the arena often say, that the spectacle is dull because the danger is not as

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great as it appears, is the reverse of the truth. As a matter of fact the skill of a good torero—the Spanish form for toreador—makes his exhibition seem like child's play until a goring proves the error. In Marseilles a combat to the death was held between a Spanish fighting bull and a tiger. The former was victorious. The bull has equal power and a more deadly weapon. In the arena the matador gives him every opportunity to use it.

The aficionado, the fan, is always shocked when a tragedy occurs, but still is it not the possibility of a fatal ending that rouses our interest as the torero stands before the pitiless horns, gambling with death? It was William James, I believe, who said that the potentiality of violent death was what constituted romance, and that the glamour of certain occupations and situations was due to this romantic vein in every one of us.

Joselito never had any illusions as to the peril of the profession he had chosen. The Spanish novelist who writes under the name of El Caballero Audaz relates that in Madrid a few evenings before his death the torero remarked as they walked together under the star-filled sky: "I don't know what more I can do to convince the crowd in Madrid that I'm gambling my life with the toros. . . . Some afternoon or other, a little slip, and. . . ." Later he added, "It will be as fate has written. . . . Bulls gore and God di-

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vides the gorings. Who knows whose turn may come next!"

What would he have thought had he known that he was soon to lose his life in the very ring inaugurated by his dead father? He seems to have had a premonition of it, for as the bull that killed him entered the arena he exclaimed to some friends at the barrier, "What an ugly look that torito has! He's the worst of all. We shall see. . . ."

Many a torero has paid for renown with his life, but never had the greatest figure of the age in the art of bull-fighting been cut down at the height of his career.

The crowds that followed his hearse as the body was brought through Madrid, and later buried in Seville, the telegrams of condolence coming from every quarter, even from the conservative Ex-Sultan of Morocco, bore witness of his immense popularity and of the high esteem in which he was held.

The dining room of his home, which had seen many a joyous celebration, was transformed into a capilla ardiente hung in black and filled with flickering tapers. There he lay in the coffin, his youthful features in repose, the mocking smile that almost never left him, still on his lips. Only his hands were tense, as though still clutching at life.

More than a year has passed since his death,

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and Spain still grieves. The national mourning for this torero was like the wave of sorrow that swept this country when Lincoln was assassinated.

Of the many manifestations of grief, one of the most curious was a distinct revival of a custom that had gradually been dying out, that of ballad making. In the public squares, in front of cafés, and even on the trains one heard any number of popular compositions celebrating his exploits and describing his tragic fate, just as in ancient times the deeds of other national heroes were made the subject of song. Some were sung to old folk-tunes, others to a special air.

When I left Seville a man with a guitar boarded the train and sang endless verses of one of these ballads. Similarly in a Sevillian theater I heard a singer, dressed entirely in black, sing the copla of Gallito, as Joselito, or José, was variously known. Here are a few verses from it:

"No ha habido nunca en el mundo  
Torero completo como fué José,  
Pues dominaba a los toros  
Con arte y la gracia que tenía él.

"Before his day the world had never known  
A matador more perfect than José.  
In mastering the bulls he had a way,  
A skill, an art, a grace that were his own."

The words were banal enough, but such was the respect and sorrow in the hearts of the crowd,

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that it greeted the song with a depth of feeling that was most impressive.

Joselito's career was unique. As is often the case, he came from a family of bull-fighters. His father, Fernando Gómez, was the well-known matador nicknamed El Gallo, The Fighting Cock. The elder brother, Rafael, then later Joselito inherited their father's nickname on taking up his profession. Each of Joselito's three sisters is married to a torero, one of whom is the famous Sánchez Mejías. His cousins are banderilleros.

All his life bulls were his absorbing interest. At the age of four occurred his first encounter with them. In the corral adjoining his house there was a bull calf of fighting stock. His Gypsy uncle, Manuel Ortega, took the little boy and led him in front of the calf to see if he would be frightened. Joselito was not. In fact he begged his uncle to let go his hand, and went toward the half savage creature. No sooner was he alone than the animal knocked him over, but he got up smiling. It was the uncle who was frightened.

Joselito's first professional experience was in Portugal, where the Gypsy lad, who was soon destined to become a millionaire through his own individual earnings, was under contract to fight Sundays at a weekly salary of fifty cents. Four years he served his apprenticeship, traveling third class or walking from place to place. He



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was not quite fourteen when he donned the gold-embroidered costume and entered a regular arena, that of Jerez, for the first time.

Asked about his impressions when he first trod the sand of the ring in Madrid, the ambition of every novice, he exclaimed: "Man alive! . . . If it hadn't been for the alguaciles, the heralds, leading the way I'd never have gotten as far as the presidencia, the official's box. I went along blind with joy, uncertainty, fear . . . I don't know what!"

At seventeen he left the class of novilleros, and was admitted by his elder colleagues to the rank of full-fledged matador. This "doctorate" of bull-fighting had never before been granted to one so young. Few indeed are those who receive it as young as twenty, and only one other had received it younger than this, the brave, unhappy Espartero, who became a matador at nineteen. It was Joselito's brother, Rafael, who performed the ceremony, handing him the trastos de matar, the weapons of death.

Though less of a Gypsy than Rafael, Joselito revealed certain traits which, though seldom associated with the Gitanos, nevertheless reveal the true Gypsy: his fatalism, his belief in the luckiness of certain religious symbols, his devotion to his mother and brother, his unfailing gaiety under the most trying circumstances, his ingratiating manner and ability to talk.

## GYPSIES IN THE BULL RING

In his home in Seville he kept a shrine to the Virgin of Hope, La Macarena, as she is known familiarly as though a neighbor of the simple folk of the Macarena Quarter. What hours of anguish his Gypsy mother must have spent kneeling at this family shrine the days when he was fighting! Talking to El Caballero Audaz one day, Joselito drew a medal from his breast and kissed it. "Do you see this?" he remarked. "I was carrying this medal of the Virgin of Hope the afternoon the bull got the better of me in San Sebastián. It's bent double from the animal's horn; and if it hadn't struck square in the middle, it would have gone through my heart."

Placed from time to time between the cutting jibes of the populace and the sharp prongs of the bull, it is little wonder that the ordinary torero is given to fits of temper. But even under such circumstances Joselito almost never lost his serenity and his proud satiric smile.

Most toreros, too, are blunt, silent fellows with a touch of disagreeable conceit; but Joselito had a naturally distinguished manner. As one writer pointed out: "Many a young aristocrat would have envied his gentlemanly ease, and his pleasing conversational ability."

How frequently in the case of the Gypsy do extremes meet! The humblest Romani has a sense of proud superiority that puts him at his ease in the most exalted company. Joselito

might have said with the Gypsy girl, Belica, in Cervantes' play, Pedro de Urdemalas:

"And so in certain ways, I think  
It properly befits my fate  
That kings should show me courtesy."

In an interview with the editor of a newspaper in Lima, Joselito related a well-known incident that happened in Madrid. "A companion of ours, the bull-fighter, Minuto, was condemned to six years of prison, suffering the penalty imposed on account of a brawl, one of those quarrels that will happen! . . . Every year there's the Red Cross Corrida, organized by the Queen, and it's one of the most important of the season in Madrid. It came into my head to try and get poor Minuto released then and there. His family scarcely had any means of support. The three matadors in the corrido were Juan (Joselito referred to his inseparable comrade, Belmonte), Vázquez, and myself. I consulted them: 'What do you think of asking the Queen for poor Minuto?' And they said, 'As you like, Joselito. Let's see if we can do something!'"

They all signed a petition to the Queen and obtained permission from the Governor of Madrid to enter the royal box just before the opening of the bull-fight. Continuing his story, Joselito related: "Juan said to me, 'Look here, Joselito, I couldn't talk to the Queen. I'd be

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too embarrassed,' and Vázquez added, 'You can put me in front of all the bulls in the world and I won't be afraid, but the Queen is the Queen! That's clear! I wouldn't know how to talk to kings and queens and ask them a favor.'

"I made up my mind, and we went up to the box. We bowed. The royal family has always been very friendly toward me. It was shortly after the time I had the misfortune of losing my mother, and the Infanta spoke of it and told me that she was very sorry. The unhappy thought almost choked me with sadness. I thanked them. I pulled myself together and handed the Queen the petition signed by Juan, Vázquez, and myself. The Queen read it carefully. She passed it to the King and to the Infanta. 'Very well, Joselito,' they said, 'the pardon is granted!'

"And after the corrida, in which we were very lucky and all of us did well, our companion was set free."

The last time Joselito mounted his favorite horse was to render homage to her Majesty.

Simpático, good-looking, with a marvelous physique having the strength and elasticity of steel, it was no wonder that with his wholesome joviality he should have been idolized by the women of Spain. He once said that often when things were going wrong and he was ready to sink out of sight behind the barrier, half

blinded with tears of disappointment, that a look of compassion from "the Gypsy eyes" of some girl, amid the hostile shouting mob, had made him attack the bull like a wild boar and more than do his best.

"Don't imagine," he remarked one day, "that the life of a torero is an enviable one. We never stop going—from train to train, from danger to danger, and often from fiasco to fiasco. We never have time to so much as look at a woman. It's deadly. . . . The goring I got in Barcelona was because of two dark eyes. . . ."

"That caught your attention in the ring?" someone asked.

"No, that I spent the previous night gazing into. . . . There are times one would rather be gored than fling aside certain joys."

He had refrained from marrying so that he could give himself completely to his profession. His art was his only bride, a bride that proved a wanton, that stole his youth, and took his very life.

In spite of all the sacrifices his career entailed, he never regretted his choice of a profession. "Don't you see my love for it is something beyond my control?" he exclaimed. "If I were to be born a thousand times, each time I would be a torero. . . . Neither kings, nor emperors, nor generals have enjoyed the taste of triumph of a successful afternoon in the ring at Madrid. It's



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a frenzy of exaltation. It seems to me there's nothing comparable."

Such was the career of the greatest bull-fighter of modern times. That he should have been a Gypsy is not strange, for a fair proportion of toreros have been Gypsies; and nearly all affect a certain Gitano style in their speech and dress. Joselito himself made the following remark: "The born torero should cherish all the *graciosas flamerquerías* (the graceful, spirited Gypsy ways) that adorn the art. . . . If not, he might as well admit that he is a mere bull-fighter for profit."

In bull-fighting the various qualities of the Gypsy are seen to the best advantage. It is an art that calls for the power to master not only the wild animal straining every muscle to gore the man to death, but also the power to dominate the real beast—the crowd. The bull-fighter must have the strength of the athlete, and the courage of the soldier, combined with the agility of the dancer, and the temperament of the artist. He must be able to pose with unconscious grace. And above all, he must be a fatalist. These prerequisites the Gypsy has to a supreme degree.

The term bull-fight is a misnomer. The *corrida* is not a contest, but an art. It is a spectacle of the human traits just mentioned. It is a spectacle of light, color, movement, with a distinctly plastic appeal. The eye of the Spanish

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spectator is quick to catch the beauty of line, the power and grace of certain poses.

Pérez de Ayala, the distinguished poet and critic, who was a friend of Joselito, has compared the corrido to Greek tragedy with its purgation of the spirit through pity and terror.

It has been objected that bull-fighting is cruel. The objection is unfortunately true. But enjoyment of corridos is infinitely less cruel than the vicarious pleasure which the world as a whole still takes in wars. The struggle of man with man is so futile, so treacherous in the face of the larger struggle of man with his eternal enemy—the hostile powers of nature. The bull-fight is a representation of this latter type of warfare.

The Gypsy, accustomed to struggling for centuries breast to breast with the brute forces of nature, is admirably adapted to present this epic strife in all its stark awesomeness. A large portion of the breeders of fighting-bulls belong to the nobility. Kings and poets may look on, but only a child of the soil may act in such a drama, a drama of Death and Fate, the image of life, over which broods relentlessly the end that none may escape.

Though civilization has made us inept for fighting, save that of which the mathematically manipulated long-range cannon is the type, our basic natures have remained unchanged since pre-historic times. The images of our primordial

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beginnings are to be found in animals. And our kinship with them makes them a spectacle of never-failing interest. In zoos they cannot reveal their true selves; but in the arena the fighting-bull is able to display its essential character.

The corrida has an additional appeal in conjuring up the past. It is among the common people of Europe that one comes closest to the Renaissance and the Middle Ages. Living as a rule in the older sections of the cities in what were splendid mansions in the days of yore, it is the populace that has maintained the picturesqueness of costume, the naif mind, the brutality, the custom of carrying weapons, and even the exaggerated code of honor of the old nobility. But in no country is this so true as in Spain, especially among the Gypsies and the bull-fighters.

Once in Scotland at the castle of the Earl of Eglington and Winton, when the old Earl showed another youth and myself the trophy won by a member of his family in the last tournament in which men in armor jousted with lances in the presence of crowned heads, it seemed as though the past was so close that I could reach out and touch it with my hand.

And yet it was a dead past, artificially revived. It was not until I saw a corrida in Spain that I got the true *feel* of the vanished ages, and saw them live before my very eyes. Here were

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mounted men in armor, whose lives depended on their lances, enduring dangerous falls, and other men with swords, in ancient, colorful costumes, braving death for the beauty of a gesture. Here in flesh and blood were Richard the Lion-Hearted and Benvenuto Cellini.

Hearing of the feria in Valencia, with its numerous corridas, its juegos florales, poetic contests that are a revival of those which the troubadours once held throughout these lands, I lost no time in reaching the city.

When I arrived I learned that every seat in the huge arena, that holds 17,000 spectators, had been sold long in advance for all eight of the corridas. No one talked of anything save the principal matadors, Rafael El Gallo, Belmonte, and Sánchez Mejías, and of the difficulty in obtaining seats.

Every Plaza de Toros is divided into two parts, Sol y Sombra, Sun and Shade. In order to get a seat near the barrier and near the shade I was forced to take my place each day in the unreserved Sol section two hours before the corrida began. It was midsummer, and the semi-tropical sun had lost little of its force by three o'clock. The stone tiers, after accumulating its noon rays, were too hot to touch with the bare hand. And there we sat for five hours on thin excelsior pillows that soon grew as hard as the rock itself, but saved us from the scorching stone. Mean-



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while, with the concave ring about us and the clear convex sky above, it seemed as though we were in the focus of a giant burning glass. Yet no one complained: we were about to see the greatest remaining masters of the art.

Belmonte, who was one of the matadors of the afternoon, had been Joselito's most intimate friend. The day in Madrid that he had stood beside the body of the man by whose side he had fought again and again his eyes had filled with tears, which he sought to hide with his hat brim, or wiped away, pretending to mop the sweat from his face.

Joselito had always been fond of him. There never had been a shadow of professional jealousy between them, as is shown by the following story, which Joselito liked to relate.

On the way to Jerez, where he was going by auto to take part in a corrida in which Belmonte was the other matador, he stopped at a wineshop on the outskirts of the city without being recognized. Two muleteers at an adjoining table were having a heated argument as to which of the two toreros was the better. So fierce was their rage and conviction, that they were ready to kill each other. Finally the partisan of Belmonte turned to Joselito and said, "This fellow doesn't know bulls from a potato. Do you hear what foolishness he talks? He says that Joselito is the best bull-fighter, that he plants the banderillas



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like God, and that he takes the bulls with his cape like the Virgin Mary. . . .”

Immediately the other muleteer, who had been championing Joselito, appealed to him, without the faintest idea of who he was, to say which was the better torero, he or Belmonte. Not without apprehension of personal violence, the famous matador replied that he preferred Belmonte. The man sprang toward him like a tiger, and banging his fist on the table, he shouted: “Do you know what you are? You’re a gingerbread chicken! You never saw a bull except in beefsteaks!”

“But have you ever seen Joselito fight?” asked the matador.

“No, señor,” he replied. “Nor Belmonte either; it’s the same with me as with this here man; but according to what the boss says. . . .” Joselito could hardly keep from laughing at the sight of these two men ready to kill one another over two toreros that they had never even seen in the ring.

He gave them a five-dollar bill to get tickets for the corrida, saying, “You’ll like Belmonte better.” Three days later he stopped his auto in front of the wineshop. “How goes it?” he called to the muleteers.

“Hijo de mi alma, what a trick you played on us!” exclaimed the second muleteer. “I’m still for you stronger than the Pope. And the

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worst of it is I haven't anyone to argue with because this fellow has come over to my side."

Another matador that was to fight that afternoon in Valencia was Joselito's brother, Rafael El Gallo, the typical Gypsy torero, and the best of his day. In his long career he has probably earned more money than any other matador, and spent more. When he drives up the street in his Andalusian coach drawn by mules with bells that gaily ring, there is always a Gypsy or a disabled torero waiting at his door; and El Gallo never turns them away with an empty pocket.

He is fond of singing and dancing, and is married to one of the most popular singers of the stage. His chief joy is to pass the night in Gypsy fiestas, which has made it hard for him to keep in training. The fame of his reckless extravagance in these juergas, like the fame of his artistry in the bull ring, is world wide. I was sitting one evening in a café cantante in San Isidro Street, Havana. On the wall was a life-size bull-fight poster of El Gallo. "There's a flamenco for you!" a Gypsy dancer standing near me remarked as she glanced at the poster. "When he comes into a café instead of ordering wine by the bottle he calls for a case—of the best. And in a juerga instead of one guitar player he insists on four."

El Gallo's affection for Joselito was only equaled by Joselito's affection for him. As the latter once said: "Rafael isn't a brother to me;

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he has always been a father. As I was a child when mother was left a widow, he has been a father to us all!"

"The worst moment I ever spent in my life," he continued, "was the day I was in the arena in Algenciras with Rafael, and a bull gored him. How I suffered that afternoon! . . . When I saw him fall to the ground with blood gushing out, I didn't know whether to weep, or shout, or throw myself on the bull. . . . In fact, for a minute I couldn't even speak." Joselito killed the beast with extraordinary skill and courage. Speaking of this, he said: "But I don't know how I did it, because the one idea I had was to get through with it as soon as possible so that I could go and take my brother in my arms."

Rafael is probably the greatest living torero, but his unevenness has marred his reputation, and gained him such varying epithets as the "Man of Fears," the "Immense," and the "Divine." He has all the dash and grace of the Gypsy; but he also has the Gypsy love of life. It has been his one great obstacle to popularity.

His consummate skill permits him to take chances that would be fatal to many another. One day in Valencia I saw him, with one knee on the ground, prick the charging bull with his sword to make it whirl its horns within an inch of his body. The crowd was electrified. Everyone was standing. When seventeen thousand

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pairs of hands had clapped until they were sore, and as many voices had cheered themselves breathless, handkerchiefs began to wave from every segment of the vast circle, and hats were flung into the arena.

In the next day's corrida his nerves were evidently unstrung. Refusing to gamble his life he preferred the insults of the howling, threatening mob to the fury of the bull. While waiting for his second bull I saw him sitting as far down behind the barrier as possible, his head bowed in his hands.

Perhaps he was thinking of his brother, Jose-lito. Barely two months had passed since he was gored to death at Talavera. Perhaps El Gallo had a vision of the boy lying on the cot where they had carried him from the scene of his last triumph, his vitals protruding from a gaping wound. And now the very crowd that had mourned for his brother would soon be yelling to him to imperil his life with greater recklessness.

Being feria week, the corrida was followed by a parade of carriages and motor cars from the gate of the Plaza de Toros down the wide Calle de Colón and across the bridge to the Alameda. In the dry river bed I noticed a group of boys playing at bull-fighting. With a pair of real horns mounted on a wooden block one of the younger lads was charging his companions. The latter, with darts for banderillas and with a



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wooden sword, were going through all the evolutions of a corrida, preserving the proper regard for the "rules" and "style," just as small boys here playing One Old Cat will exaggerate the movements of the star ball players whose pictures they have seen in the papers, and whose fame they have dreamed of rivaling.

The crowd had gathered on either side of the gaily decorated promenade to watch the horsemen and vehicles passing up and down four abreast. The women in gorgeously embroidered shawls and the men in Cordova hats, perched beside the coachmen or on the backs of the seats, were throwing confetti in showers of multi-colored light, or casting serpentine in graceful spirals as though trying to catch and hold for a moment with the coiling streamers one another's laughing lips and bright eyes, gazing intoxicated with the joy of youth.

In spite of the novelty and picturesqueness of the scene I could not shut out of my mind the vision of El Gallo with his head bowed in his hands, the incarnation of grief and humiliation. Did he not love life as much as they? Did he not love gaiety as much as they? Should he have risked all just to make the holiday of these *gaćé* complete? Perhaps if he had—as his brother had always done—he too would be lying cold and quiet, while the crowd, bent solely on its own amusement, still pulsed with the rhythm of life.



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On my return to Barcelona the first thing that caught my attention as I strolled down the Ramblas was a flaming poster announcing the debut of three bull-fighters, Ortuño, Palmeño, and El Gitanillo de Ricla, the little Gypsy from Ricla. Seven bull-fights in five days had not lessened my interest in them, especially when I could see a Gypsy torero. I had no trouble in getting a seat at the barrier, as the three novilleros were unknown. As it chanced, it was the most interesting corrida I have ever seen.

It was about to begin. Fans were fluttering on all sides, as though a visible expression of the hearts that were palpitating with suspense. The band played a lively Paso Doble Flamenco, and the Alguacil, a Gypsy dressed in the costume of the seventeenth century, and looking very proud on his spirited horse, caught in his plumed hat the key to the toril, from which at last the bull came bounding.

It halted, turning its powerful neck with tense quivers toward first one then another of the brilliant forms in silk and gold waving their colored capes. It was Palmeño's bull, and he advanced to engage it. Three times he stepped aside only slightly as the animal charged him. The fourth time the horns caught him, tossing him in the air as the great brute raised its head. He lay on the sand, face downward, inert. No one was near to divert the attention of the maddened beast.

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Wheeling, it charged the motionless man and gored him again as he lay there helpless.

Three toreros on either side, like pallbearers lifting a coffin, raised the limp body of their comrade over the first barrier, and then returned to the arena. The tragedy had to go on.

I sat there sick with horror. I had brought a bottle of Manzanilla and some delicacies to eat during the intermission, more than an hour later. But I could not choke down a single morsel, or drink any wine, for the ghastly sensation still continued.

The second espada, Ortuño, had obviously been impressed by his companion's misfortune. His nerves were shattered. His efforts to kill the savage animal were hesitating; and twice the President gave the warning. A third time and the bull would have been returned to the corral and he would have had to leave the ring in disgrace. Before it could be given, the horns of the bull caught the fellow's faltering wrist. Thankful that he was escaping from the arena alive, he retired to the hospital; and he did not return.

Of the three espadas only one remained in the ring, El Gitanillo. It fell to him to dispatch all six of the bulls. He was a mere lad, an unknown novillero at the beginning of his career. It was the deciding moment of his life, no doubt. The two Castellians had been clumsy and afraid. It was his chance to show what a Gypsy could do.

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No matter how much the sight of his two comrades sent to the hospital might have affected his nerves, he knew that he must conceal his fear not only from the crowd, which never forgives cowardice, but more especially from the bull. If not he was lost.

A spectator, anxious to show his prowess, leaped the barrier and ran into the arena defying the bull, standing with chest thrown out in an attitude of mock heroism. "Matamore! Chesty!" someone shouted. When the animal came near him he started to dodge like a squirrel. The crowd roared; but its laughter turned to a cry of dismay as the bull flung him headlong. El Gitanillo was at his side in a flash, waving his cape to divert its attention. With a bellow of rage the brute made a rush at the Gypsy. His only movement was a rhythmic turn of the body as the cape swung gracefully over the cruel horns. A great shout went up, saluting his courage and the beauty of his style. Three times more he took the charge of the infuriated beast without giving an inch, and each time, almost in unison, a shout went up of "¡Olé!" with a mighty crescendo.

At last the bull paused, and gazed in bewilderment at the invulnerable figure. Calmly turning his back on the enemy, the Gypsy smiled and bowed to the audience, which was applauding wildly. The matamore had been helped to his

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feet by some peons, and hustled off to jail by a pair of police officers.

When the trumpet sounded for the third part of the tournament, he took the red muleta and the glistening rapier and executed all the most difficult feats of the art: passes of every sort, veronicas, and molinetes, in which the espada pirouettes as the bull charges him. Each feat was greeted by the multitude with cries of mad delight. "What a marvel!" someone exclaimed.

"A suicide!" another retorted.

With one knee on the ground and the red cloth held in front of him he edged toward the bull. Most toreros are satisfied simply to receive the onslaught of the bull in this perilous position. As the creature passed it lowered the deadly "half moon" of its horns and suddenly lifting its head held the boy suspended by the groin. The crowd gasped. Then, as he fell to the ground, and leaped to his feet with the quickness of a cat, it cheered deliriously.

A moment later he threw himself on the bull with desperate fury. Before the animal could charge the Gypsy lunged forward, sinking the blade to the hilt, high between the shoulders. The shock was staggering. It was impossible to tell whether one of the sharp prongs had pierced his side or whether he was squarely between the horns. The bull fell like a huge mass before him, and there he stood, disengaged from



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the beast, safe and sound. The multitude was on its feet yelling, clapping hands, waving hats and throwing them into the ring, drunk with enthusiasm.

After killing the first bull he was granted an honor only awarded under exceptional circumstances, an ear of the bull as a trophy. But after the fifth he was granted the greatest honor of all, the tail and both ears.

When the last toro had been dispatched promptly and valiantly, the crowd poured over the barrier into the arena and raised the new idol on their shoulders. There was such a struggle to be the ones to carry him that he was jostled this way and that for a minute before he was lifted above the heads of the mob that escorted him to his carriage. Through this seething mass an urchin wormed his way just to touch the hero with his hand.

With nerves still tingling as I followed the crowd down the stone tiers, I came across two of my Gypsy friends, Toño and Curro, volubly discussing the corrida. They were both jubilant. Though Joselito was dead and El Gallo getting old, El Gitanillo would still be able to maintain the high traditions of Gypsydom.

"Come with us, cousin!" said Curro. "I still have a pair of pesetas. We'll drink a caña or two to the new star of the arena."



## Chapter XIII

### *Barcelona and Farewell*

THE time had come to return to Paris, the heart of civilization, the capital of art, every quarter, every street of which I loved. And yet I was sad. Not even the prospect of Paris could compensate for leaving Spain, where beauty and freedom of the spirit are such an integral form of daily life that artistic expression seems superfluous. Every moment as one walks through the streets, one sees a colorful picture, a bit of mysticism, or a scene of vivid realism—of life in its crudest, but intensest forms.

How I longed to stay a little longer in that marvelous capital of Catalonia, where Spain, like Sleeping Beauty, is throwing off her lethargy after centuries of slumber! What a sense of material pleasure I had felt in the bright stone buildings on the broad boulevards, where curiously carved benches invite the idler to linger and enjoy! What a sense of eternal mystery in the thirteenth century cathedral, dark and somber save for the jewel-like glow, as of ruby, emerald, and sapphire, from the high windows, and the dim light from the yellow tapers in the gloomy chapels, or the gleam from the smoking

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censer, carried by a passing priest in white and scarlet robes!

It was hard to leave it all: the cloisters with rows of grinning gargoyles above the tombstone pavement carved with grim death's heads, half obliterated with verdant moss, where lively children's feet were skipping; the fountains in the center, with white geese swimming gracefully; the green palms and fir trees; and overhead the blue sky, cleft with a flight of doves, and ringing with the crystal music of clear chimes. Here most of all, amid the stone images of medieval warriors, as I listened to the happy cries of children, I felt the vibrant youth of renascent Spain.

Much in Catalonian architecture is bad, perhaps; but still I had been fascinated by the great façade of the Temple of the Sagrada Familia rising in isolation, like a fantastically sculptured cliff; mad, and weird, like a drawing by Hugo or a dream of Poe; carvings of algæ, cuttlefish, and monstrous flowers in queer festoons; galleries, pinnacles, and niches rough hewn from stone like cliff-dwellings.

And then there was Barceloneta, and the sea—green or blue as the light struck through the different depths; and a line of mountains, slate-gray against a slate-gray background of distant clouds. Sailors and beachmen in blue denim, lying bare-legged in the sand. Boat builders, and the yellow ribs of a craft that was growing

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under their hammers. Families folding deep brown nets and coiling fish lines. The smell of fresh seaweed and the salt breeze; the regular beat of the surf.

How could I better have spent my last day in the city than to have taken the inclined road to the top of Tibidabo, two thousand feet above? We passed white villas that recalled Tangier and Africa, ridges crowned with umbrella pines, as in Italy, slopes of heather, furze, and the yellow broom flowers. Hill after hill, each less green, fainter and more ethereal in the distance. And the view from the summit! The jagged pinacles of Montserrat, the far-off Pyrenees melting into the mist; and below, the great city, hushed and still; the wide plains, countless villages; and spreading before me toward the infinite, the mighty Mediterranean.

I was sad, too, at the thought of taking leave of my Gypsy friends. I was sure that I should find Romanies in Paris; and wherever there were Romanies, there were friends. But it was in Spain that I had first mingled with Gypsies, and it was there that I felt most like one of them.

My last night in Barcelona, after meeting Toño and Curro at the evening corrida in which El Gitanillo de Riela had proved his valor, I went with Curro to a café in Conde del Asalto Street. "I promise you a treat," he remarked.

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“There is a Gypsy from Seville, José, who promised to meet me at midnight.” As we approached the café, Curro planned a surprise. José had lived in Gibraltar for several years, and was thoroughly familiar with the language of the place. I was to enter and pretend that I was an American who could not speak a word of Spanish. José would be sure to address me in English, and I could give him the surprise of his life by replying in *Caló*.

From across the street my companion pointed him out to me. I went up to the bar where he was standing, and asked for a glass of beer in good “Amurrican.” The proprietor looked at me in astonishment. “¿Qué diablos dice? What the devil does he say?” José came to our aid and acted as interpreter; but he seemed to be on his guard. He scented a hoax. When I replied in Gypsy, he simply remarked to Curro, who had come forward to enjoy the fun: “I knew all the time that it was a scheme to fool me.” And when Curro explained that I was an American Gypsy, he insisted, with a knowing smile, that it was time to drop the mask. “I’m not as easy as all that. I can tell a Spanish *Caloró* when I meet one.”

As it happened, I was acquainted with a number of Gypsies from La Cava Vieja, in Triana, whom I had met in various parts of Spain; and I know certain intimate details of their lives.

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They were friends of his; and nothing would make him believe that I was not from La Cava myself. "Oh, I don't doubt you've been in America. Maybe you left Triana because you had to—like I skipped out to Gibraltar!" he said, with a wink. "And now you pretend you're a Gitano from across the sea." It was a far cry from the time when, with fear and trembling, I had barely hoped to be taken for a Gypsy at all.

If José had failed to believe that I was a gullible tourist, not so a pair of international crooks, a man and a woman, who were on the watch for easy prey. They had heard me when I first spoke in English, and watching their chance they approached and tried me in various languages. Finding that I spoke French, they claimed to be from across the Pyrenees, and acted as though they were overjoyed at finding someone who could parler français. A warning in deep *Caló* from the Gypsies as to the profession of the couple put me on the lookout.

We went to another café, and the crooks followed. Still speaking French, the man approached and warned me against my companions: "You don't realize it; but they're Gitanos! Get rid of them or they'll fleece you!" He treated us all; and when I came to say good-bye to him and the woman, his face fell, and he suggested that we go to another place. I had had



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enough of the comedy, but at a wink from the Gypsies I consented. After the couple had treated us once more, I insisted on leaving them; but it was easier said than done. They followed for several blocks, until at last we saw them give up their intended victim, with looks of blackest wrath at the thought that I was going off to be fleeced—by someone else.

As we were walking along the Ramblas, we happened on a gray-haired *Bu'nó*, who stopped and greeted Curro. He was a professional cantador de flamenco who had always cultivated the Gypsies, and had learned their style of singing. He had seen better days, and when his father had owned a large tavern in Madrid, the Gitanos had always been welcome. Now his money was dissipated, and his voice was gone. He was a sort of François Villon, living by songs, and by whatever might turn up. He still retained a splendid repertory of songs, and a certain fiery vigor that years could not extinguish. He was a living contradiction to the words of the old French poet vagabond:

“Tousjours viel synge est desplaisant.  
Moue ne faict qui ne desplaise.”

For the antics of this old monkey kept Curro in constant laughter. He had learned the Gypsy trick of snapping his fingers instead of using castanets. “¡Saca los palillos!” my friend would

cry, and the *Bu'nó* would strike the attitude of a dancer, and make the whole street ring with a volley of pistol-like reports that would cause everyone in the avenue to stop and look.

"Come! We'll have a *juerga*!" the man pleaded, and led us to the harbor, where he engaged a boatman, and jumped into the skiff, beckoning us to follow.

It was getting late; it was too far away, and I wished to go to Villa Rosa to say good-bye to the Gypsies there, so I refused to accompany him. My companions protested that it would be too expensive at Villa Rosa, and that we were not well enough dressed.

We compromised by all four of us going to the Café Sevilla in the Paralelo. It was a large room in the style of an Andalusian patio, filled with tables where congregated men and women of the lowest classes, including not a few criminals, according to Curro. In one corner was a large gaming table covered with a green cloth. A crowd of men and youths formed a compact hedge about it, three and four deep, simultaneously watching every movement of the dealer, with a hard glitter in their eyes. The croupier, a dwarf looking like a black spider, was shifting the coins swiftly and accurately about the table with his pliant rake. On the stage, veiled in a blue haze from countless cigarettes, Lola la Faíca in picturesque rags, and with one eye

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blackened, was giving a burlesque of Gypsy dances.

The scene was interesting as a picaresque tableau, and would have delighted Goya. But for a farewell impression I wanted beauty rather than grotesquesness, and decided on Villa Rosa. Pinning his coat up about his neck with a safety pin to hide the absence of a collar, the old *Bu'no* followed us, not wholly against his will, for he knew that where we were going there would be only the best of Jerez wines.

It was a delight to be once more among the Romanies who had done their best to make my previous stay in Barcelona a joyous one. For a time they left the señoritos and crowded about my table, laughing, improvising songs, and dancing. With what a quickened rhythm my whole being seemed to pulse as I watched these children of nature in their marvelous Manila shawls of daring color and design, with fragrant starry jasmin in their black hair, with white teeth and flashing eyes, and saw them sway and stamp, and strike sudden attitudes of pride and freedom. As the songs gracefully prolonged their notes, then burst in rapid runs, I could think of nothing that suggested the Gypsies and their art so much as a mountain torrent in the Pyrenees, gliding in smooth curves, then dashing in descending clouds of spray amid banks of brilliant wild flowers glistening in the sunlight,

## NIGHTS AND DAYS ON THE GYPSY TRAIL

It happened that Faíco was there, a Gitano from La Cava Vieja in Triana, who had once earned a scanty living in the cafés of Seville. Otero had informed me how he had more or less discovered him, and how later Faíco had been the first to arrange and present on the stage certain Gypsy dances: the Garrotín and the Farruca. The former had become the dance of the day; and now he was the highest paid artist in Europe. Seeing him there that night, handsome and dressed with the utmost elegance and taste, tanging with a Music Hall estrella, I should hardly have taken him for a New York banker, as Otero once suggested, but rather for the prodigal son of a South American millionaire. He was frankly puzzled by my knowledge of the little Gypsy world of Spain. He could not, like José, believe that I was a part of it; but he was very cordial, and joined the others in their festival of welcome and farewell.

Marvelous dancer that he was, he scarcely outdid my friend Curro. It was the first time that I had seen the latter dance. He was not a professional. In fact the only trade he exercised, as far as I could surmise, was that of smuggler—and that only seldom. He was too lazy. However, as a bailador he was astounding; for when it came to getting or giving pleasure, no pains or exertion were too great. His improvisations were in a sense exaggerated, but



## BARCELONA AND FAREWELL

full of the rarest combination—passion and humor. I have never seen such an embodiment of the joy of living.

It was interesting to see the way the Gypsies treated the poor old *Bu'no* singer: not as one of them, but with kindness and respect. It was entirely unnecessary for him to remind Faíco that he had befriended him in the days when his father owned a tavern in Madrid, and the famous dancer was only an unknown baila'or de flamenco at La Marina. A Gentile is always a Gentile to the Romanies; but kindness to them is never forgotten, no matter from what source it may come. The *Bu'no* was invited out of compliment to sing. He began:

“Do not scorn me 'cause I'm poor.

You ne'er can tell! You ne'er can tell!

The world keeps turning like a wheel. . . .

And yesterday a tower fell!”

The philosophy of the copla was not lost on its hearers. Accustomed to all the turns of fortune, none knew better than they the capriciousness of fate.

It was four o'clock in the morning. We were hungry. In the shadow of the lofty Columbus Monument in the Plaza de la Paz, is a little open-air kiosk that serves as a restaurant. It is surrounded by tables where hundreds of people sup al fresco in the small hours of the night: cabmen, camareras and their companions, smugglers,



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artistas from the theaters in the Paralelo, journalists, and even wealthy rounders. It is a favorite haunt of the Gypsies, and thither we went.

At the next table three American sailors were sitting with some women. They were trying to tell them that the captain of their ship was serving a jail sentence for smuggling, and that in consequence they were stranded and nearly broke. But no matter how loud they shouted it, they could not make themselves understood, for the women knew no English, except for a rhyme which one of them had once learned and recited as proof that she knew how to "spik Inglés."

"No tengo tabaco, no tengo papel,  
No tengo dinero. G—— d—— it to hell!"

A former star of the stage, that shone no longer save in gutter pools, stood on the outskirts of the crowd, frowsy, ragged, and tragic. In a voice that quavered and broke, she recited the lines of a great drama. A beggar paused and extended a hand, which Curro filled with bread—and meat.

The lights shone among the trees along the Rambla, and down the long rows of graceful palm trees in the Paseo beside the harbor. Alongside the steps leading down to the water, which gave the quays a Venetian air, rose the tall masts of schooners and full-rigged ships, with furled sails, like giant sea-birds resting after

## BARCELONA AND FAREWELL

flight. 'Above us extended the vast dome of blue-green darkness where the stars were palely glimmering in the faint light that comes before the dawn. How aloof! and how amusedly they twinkled as they gazed on the tragi-comedy below!

Day was breaking. The dusk was lifting like a fog. Across the purple-black of the waters, the outline of Barceloneta was visible against a band of gold that shaded upward into lilac. It was time to say farewell.

THE END

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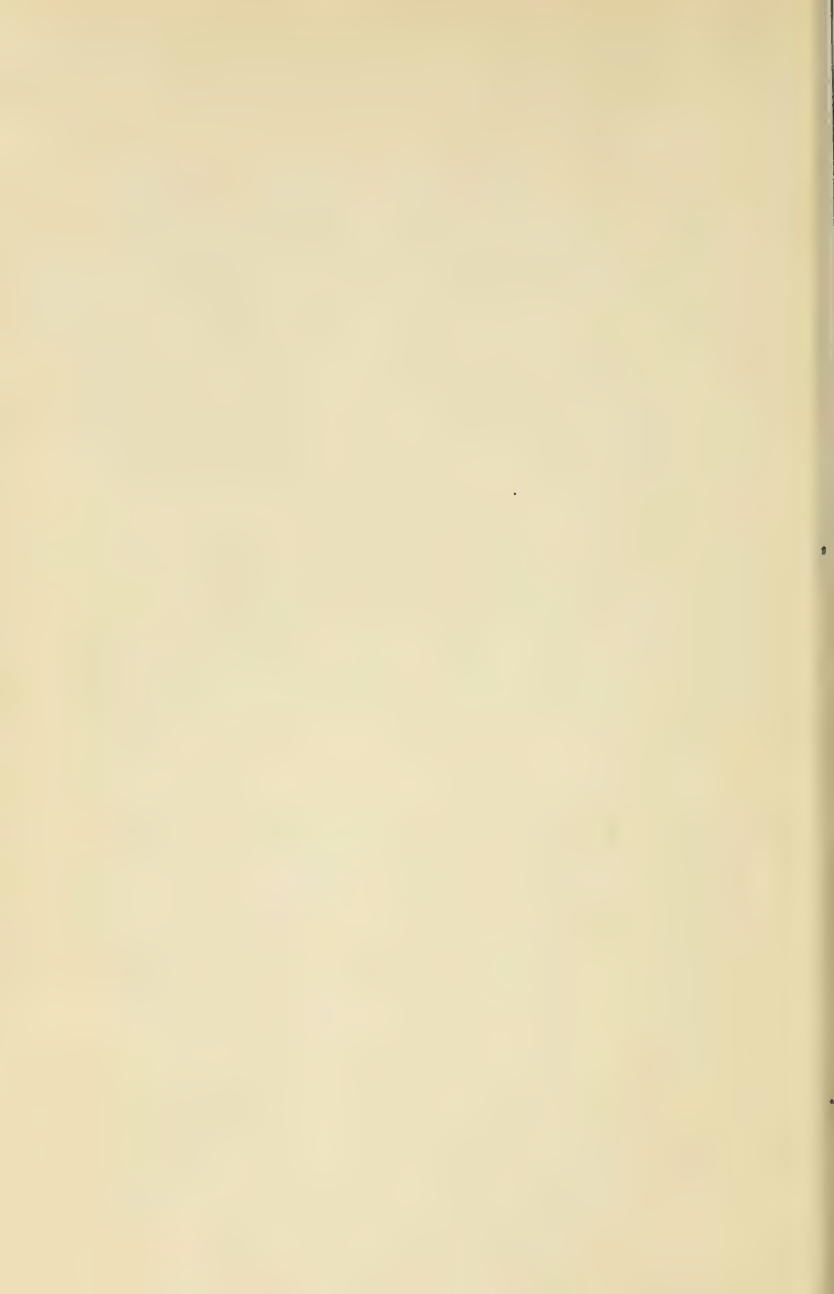
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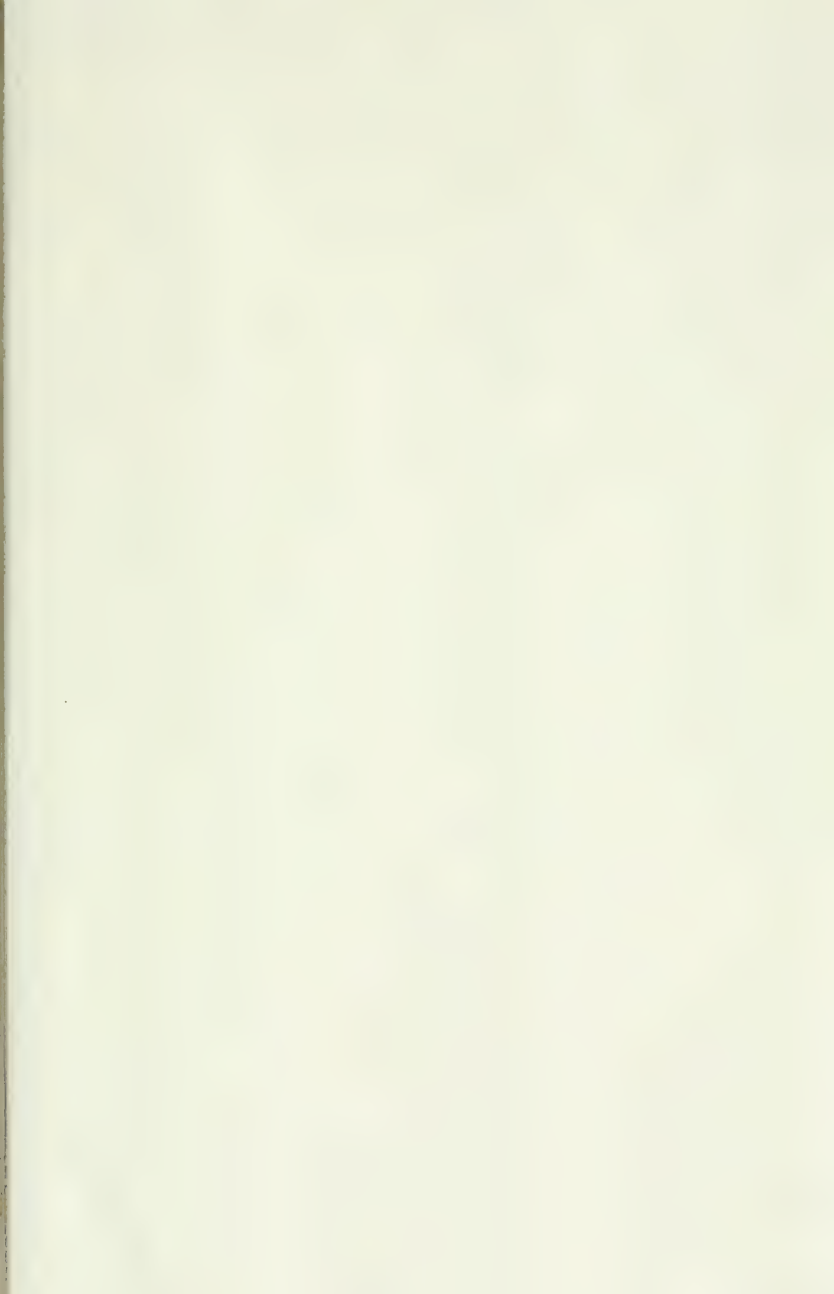
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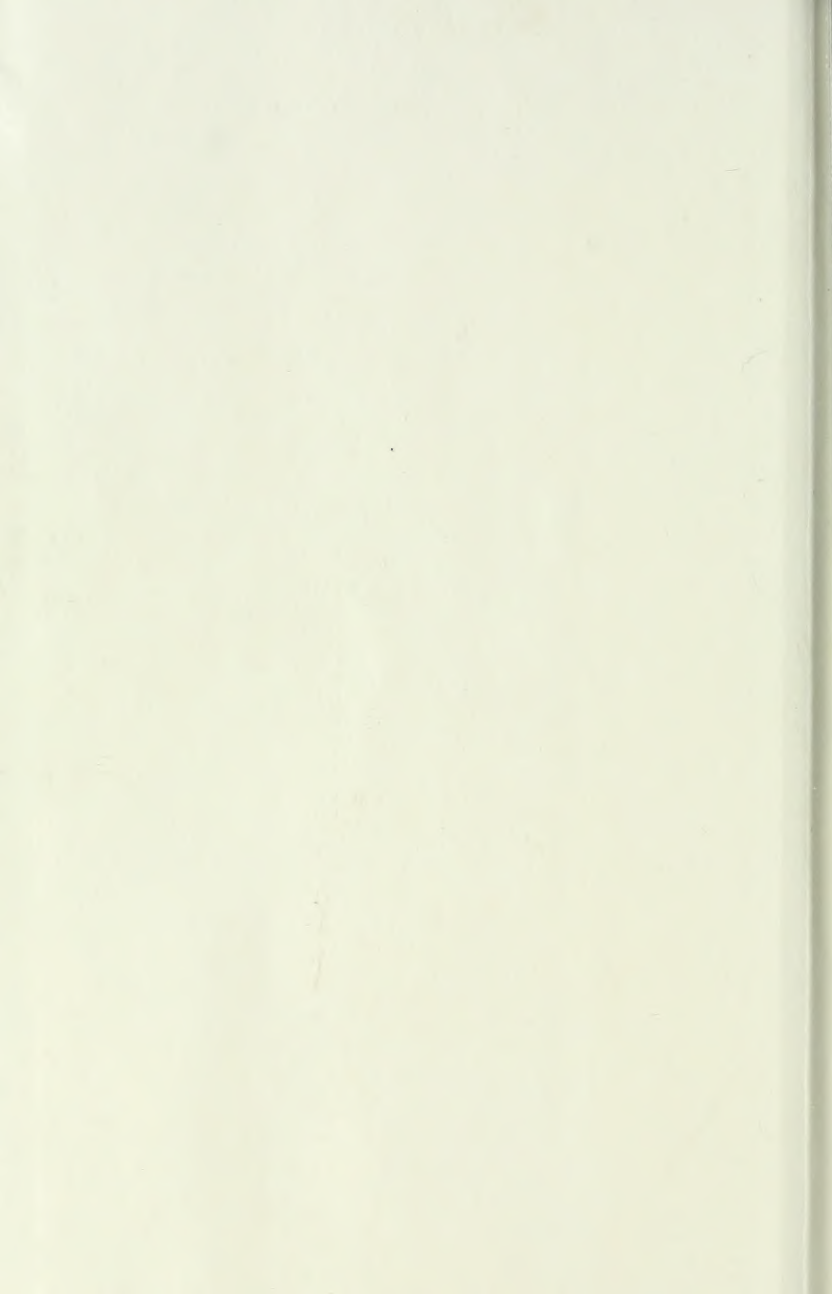












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